



# Ambrose Philips as a Dramatist.

## A Contribution to the History of English Literature in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

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Der Dekan:  
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To my friend

Fräulein Oberlehrerin M. Karnatz

in Nordhausen.

## **Prefatory Note.**

To Professor Müller-Hess I desire to express my thanks for many welcome words of advice and for the great interest he has taken in this thesis in general.

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# Contents.

## The Man and his Work.

page

### Part I.

#### His life.

1. Period (to 1708). From the poet's birth till his leaving Cambridge . . . . .	I
2. Period (1708—1724). Philips' residence in London and his quarrel with Pope . . . . .	2
3. Period (1724—1748). Philips in Ireland . . . . .	13
4. Period (1748—1749). The poet's return to London and his death . . . . .	14

### Part II.

#### Philips' Tragedies.

1. The Distrest Mother . . . . .	19
2. The Briton . . . . .	52
3. Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester . . . . .	67

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## Part I.

### His Life.

Among the minor poets of the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Ambrose Philips takes high rank. After reading his works, I thought it would be a pleasant task to try to save him from oblivion by giving a detailed account of his life and work.

First, I shall try to characterize the man; I can say very little about this poet's life, as indeed only few of its details have come down to us.

#### **First period of his life (to 1708). From his birth till his leaving Cambridge.**

Ambrose Philips was born in Shropshire, probably in 1675. Various authors, for example; 1. Baker in his *Biographia Dramatica* p. 567, 2. John Dennis in his *Age of Pope* p. 98, and 3. the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* p. 754 give 1671, but most state 1675, and as this agrees with the entry in the admission-book of St. John's College, I consider 1675 the correct date of his birth. He died in London, on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 1749; there is no doubt about this date, of course, as Philips had, by this time, attained some reputation as a poet.

He is said to have descended from a very ancient and important Leicestershire family. After the usual Grammar School education at Shrewsbury he received his academic education at St. John's College, Cambridge. According to the admission-book of St. John's College in "Mayor, St. John's College", he was son of Ambrose Philips "pannicularii", born in Shropshire, and was in his 18<sup>th</sup> year in June 1693, when he entered as a sizar. Here he graduated as B. A. 1696/97 and became M. A. in 1700. He was elected a Fellow of his college on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 1699. He seems to have lived chiefly at Cambridge until he resigned his fellowship in 1708. In 1703 Philips must have been in Holland, as one of his epistles, written to a friend in England in 1703, is dated from there. It begins thus:

"From Utrecht's silent walks, by winds, I send  
Health and kind wishes to my absent friend".

Ambrose Philips became early a student and a writer of English poetry. At Cambridge he first attracted attention by some English verses, that gave evidence of literary taste and skill. They were written for the collection published by the University, on the death of Queen Mary.

Philips' six Pastorals, perhaps his most celebrated work, also belong to this period, he is said to have written them, while at college. They were published in vol. 6 of Tonson's Miscellanies in 1709. Philips' pastorals opened the volume, and it was closed by those of Pope.

In 1700 Philips published a "Life of John Williams, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, Bishop of Lincoln and Archbishop of York in the Reigns of King James I and Charles I, in which are related some remarkable occurrences of those times, both in Church and State. With an Appendix, giving an account of his benefactions to St. John's College". This is Philips' first attempt to attract the attention of the public to his political opinions.

Philips is sometimes called "Quaker Philips"; I do not know whether for his integrity or for his religious opinions. Pope, in his treatise on the Bathos, mentions him as a zealous Protestant deacon, Swift says in 1725 in a letter to Pope: "Philips is fort chancelant whether he shall turn parson or no". From the above remark together with his authorship of "The Life of Archbishop Williams" and his great friendship with different ecclesiastics, I come to the conclusion that it is possible that he was intended for the Church and took the first orders, as some authors state.

## **Second Period of his Life (1708—1724).**

### **Philips' residence in London and his quarrel with Pope.**

In 1708, on the completion of his studies, and shortly after the composition of his Pastorals, Philips left Cambridge University, and went to London. Here he frequented Button's Coffee-house in Covent-Garden, then the rendez-vous of the most celebrated literary men, attached to the Whig party. As Philips embraced with ardour their political principles, a close intimacy was the result, and he obtained the friendship of many of the great geniuses of that age, more particularly of Sir Richard Steele and Joseph Addison.

Button's was kept by a man known to Addison and here Addison, surrounded by his little senate, "ruled over the world of taste and letters. He is sometimes called the King of Button's. Addison always had kind words of praise for his followers in the Spectator;" he often corrected their works, and they repaid him with the greatest

reverence. Sometimes they may have justified Pope's satirical allusion to the "applause" so grateful to the ear of Atticus:

"Like Cato gives his little senate laws  
And sits attentive to his own applause;  
While wits and Templars every sentence raise,  
And wonder with a foolish face of praise".<sup>1)</sup>

Here in London Philips met Pope and Swift, and must have been on very good terms with the latter. In 1709 Philips was employed in some missions in the north; in March 1709 he published his poetical letter from Copenhagen, addressed to the Earl of Dorset. In the summer of 1710 Philips visited Denmark for a second time, and came back to London in October. He went to Copenhagen with Lord Mark Kerr. In the Aldine edition of Swift's works we find two interesting letters from Swift to Philips while abroad, which Dr. Johnson calls very Whiggish. Swift says here: "I wish, the victory we have got, and the scenes you pass through, would put you into humour of writing a Pastoral to celebrate the Duke of Marlborough, who, I hope, will soon be your General". In a letter of the 30<sup>th</sup> Oktober 1709 Swift writes to Philips: "When you write any more poetry, do me honour, mention me in it. It is the common request of Tully and Pliny to the great authors of their age, and I will contrive it so that Prince Posterity shall know I was favoured by the men of wit in my time". Though the Dean is known as having always desired to be commemorated by his brother authors, this letter further shows, that Swift highly esteemed Philips, who was his junior by eight years.

Through all his later life, especially after his starting the "Free-thinker" in 1718, Philips' pecuniary circumstances were easy, sometimes even affluent, as he was, mostly on account of his political principles, always connected with men of high rank, and in powerful positions. At this period, however, he was probably in poor circumstances. An amusing anecdote which verifies this statement, is told of Philips, by Drake in his Essays, vol. I p. 180, Richard Steele and Savage. Mr. Hurd repeats it in his edition of Addison's Works vol. V p. 375<sup>1)</sup> and, among others, Alexander Beljame in "le Public et les Hommes de Lettres en Angleterre au 18<sup>e</sup> siecle p. 370". Therefore I think, it may not inappropriately be introduced here. "These three celebrated characters, after spending an evening together at a tavern in Gerrard Street, Soho, sallied out some time after midnight, in high glee and spirits. They were accosted by a tradesman, at the top of Hedge Lane, who, after begging their pardon for addressing them on the subject, told them, that at the top of the lane he had seen two

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<sup>1)</sup> The Poetical Works of A. Pope, Globe Edition p. 277, vv. 209—212.

or three suspicious looking fellows, who appeared to be bailiffs, so that if any of them were apprehensive of danger, he would advise them to take a different route. Not one of them waited to thank the man, but they flew off in different directions, each conscious, from the embarrassment of his own affairs, that such a circumstance was very likely to happen to himself."

As Steele and Savage are wellknown to constantly have been in pecuniary embarrassment, it is very easy to guess why these three gentlemen had such need to fear the bailiff. According to the law they might be put in prison for debt, but they could not be arrested in their own homes. I have in mind Daniel Defoe who got the nickname of "Sunday gentleman", as for a long time he only dared to go out on Sundays, for fear of being arrested for debt on weekdays.

In 1709 Philips translated the "Contes Persans" of Petis de la Croix, which he published under the title "The 1000 and 1 Days, Persian Tales". This may be regarded as another instance of his poverty at this time. The following passage occurs in Drake's Essays vol. I p. 264 ff.: "He refused not to translate for Tonson the 'Persian Tales' from the French, at a price so low, that he afterwards was unwilling to be reminded of the transaction". Pope reproaches him in his Satires with turning a Persian Tale for half a crown. I shall quote, however, what Dr. Johnson says in his "Lives of the Poets" vol. III p. 260 about this affair.

"Philips was a zealous Whig, and therefore easily found access to Addison and Steele, but his ardour seems to have procured him nothing more than kind words, since he was reduced to translate the 'Persian Tales' for Tonson, for which he was afterwards reproached with this addition of contempt, that he worked for half-a-crown. The book is divided into many sections, for each of which if he received half a crown, his reward, as writers then were paid, was very liberal; but half a crown had a mean sound."

Philips, however, neglected no means to improve his situation; like most men of letters in his time he wrote for the noblemen from whom he expected patronage, and for the Whigs, his political party; to support it, he did all that was in his power. In those times the fact that a man had written some pleasing verses, and was a popular figure at the clubs, seemed sufficient reason for his appointment to an important public position. In December 1710 Swift calls him "poor pastoral Philips and promises to procure him the post of Queen's secretary at Geneva. But in his Journal to Stella, dated June 30<sup>th</sup> 1711, the Dean says:-

"This evening I have had a letter from Mr. Philips, the pastoral poet, to get him a certain employment from lord treasurer. I have now had almost all the Whigpoets my solicitors, and I have been

useful to Congreve, Steele and Harrison; but I will do nothing for Philips; I find he is more a puppy than ever, so do not solicit for him". As in 1710 Swift had changed colours and gone over to the Tories, it is easy to understand his growing indifference to Philips.

In December 1710 Swift writes to Stella:

"Mr. Addison and I are as different as black and white, and I believe, our friendship will go off by this d — business of party".

And on the 14<sup>th</sup> September 1711:

"This evening I met Addison and pastoral Philips in the Park, and supped with them in Addison's lodgings. We were very good company, and I yet know no man half so agreeable to me as he is. I sat with them till twelve". On the 27<sup>th</sup> December 1712 he writes about Philips to Stella: "I should certainly have provided for him, had he not run party mad".

By this time Philips had in fact become a most ardent Whig, and a prominent member of the Addison circle; he was Addison's constant associate, and one of the best known wits at Button's. He became secretary to the Hanover Club, an association, formed in the latter part of Queen Anne's reign for securing the succession. In support of their principles the members of this club used particularly to distinguish in their toasts such of the fair sex as were most zealously attached to the Hanoverian family. Here I quote the lines which Philips wrote in honour of those ladies:

"While these, the chosen beauties of our isle,  
Propitious on the cause of freedom smile;  
The rash Pretender's hopes we may despise,  
And trust Britannia's safety to their eyes".

Philips' position in this club, together with the zeal shown in his writings, made him hope much from the new government, but, like Defoe he was not sufficiently rewarded, in comparison with other Whigs. After the accession of George I in 1714, Philips was made Justice of the Peace for Westminster, and in 1717, Commissioner for the Lottery with a yearly salary of £ 500 "for the service of himself, clerks and others". Dr. Johnson says about this:

"When, upon the succession of the House of Hanover (1. 8. 1714), every Whig expected to be happy, Philips seems to have obtained too little notice: he caught few drops of the golden shower, though he did not omit what flattery could perform".<sup>1)</sup>

Amongst other authors Paul Whitehead relates that, when Addison became Secretary of State in 1717, Philips applied to him for

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<sup>1)</sup> Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* vol. III p. 265

some preferment, but was answered, that it was thought he was already provided for, by being made a Justice for Westminster. To this observation Philips, with some indignation, replied, "Though poetry was a trade he could not live by, yet he scorned to owe subsistence to another which he ought not to live by". Nevertheless they remained good friends until Addison's death in 1719.

Most of Philips' literary work belongs to this period of his life. Besides the before-mentioned writings he published his three tragedies during this time. "The Distrest Mother" was finished in 1712, "The Briton" 1722 and "Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester", 1723. The great applause he gained with the "Distrest Mother" he owes in great part to the endeavours of Steele and Addison to attract the attention of the public to this tragedy.

In 1718 Philips started a paper called the "Freethinker". This work gained him several intimate friends, a considerable reputation, and — what was most necessary for him — a permanent independence. Dr. Johnson calls it "his happiest undertaking".<sup>1)</sup> Philips had several associates, who soon formed for him another circle of friends and protectors. The most important of his coadjutors and one of his truest friends was Dr. Boulter, who, as Dr. Johnson says,<sup>2)</sup> "then only minister of a parish in Southwark, was of so much consequence to the Government that he was made first Bishop of Bristol, and afterwards Lord Primate of Ireland, where his piety and charity will be long honoured".

I shall quote some lines from a poem by Dr. Madden, entitled "Boulter's Monument",<sup>3)</sup> they give us a fine picture of Boulter's noble character.

"Some write their wrongs in marble, he, more just,  
Stoop'd down serene and wrote them in the dust,  
Tro'd under foot, the sport of every wind,  
Swept from the earth, and blotted from his mind.  
There, secret in the grave, he bade them lie  
And griev'd they could not 'scape the Almighty's eye."

Boulter may be considered as Philips' most liberal and faithful friend and protector. Pope hints at their long intimacy, which lasted to Boulter's death in 1742, in his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot:

"Still to one bishop Philips seems a wit".

Another associate was the Right Honourable Richard West; he had married the daughter of Bishop Burnet, sister to the Reverend Dr. Gilbert Burnet, also a contributor to the Freethinker. West was

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<sup>1)</sup> Samuel Johnson, *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* vol. III p. 266.

<sup>2)</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3)</sup> Dr. Johnson was very fond of this poem. We find it in the last edition of his "Dictionary" under the word "Sport".

appointed King's Counsel on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 1717, and in 1725 he became Lord Chancellor of Ireland, but he did not long enjoy this high post, for he died on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1726. Another contributor was the Reverend Henry Stephens, or Steevens.

Like most men, Philips had not only his friends, but also his enemies, the most important and also the meanest among them was, no doubt, Alexander Pope. While on the one hand, Addison and Steele praised Philips too highly, on the other Pope and his friends in their biting satires ridiculed the unlucky poet and his work more than they deserved.

In 1713, when the quarrel between Pope and Philips broke out, and the latter was first attacked by Pope's satire, Philips stood high in the ranks of literature, and was chiefly brought into prominence by his authorship of the "Distrest Mother", a tragedy which was much applauded at Drury Lane, as well as by his 6 Pastorals. On their account he was highly praised in the "Guardian" no. 23, 30 and 32 as the only worthy successor of Spenser. In no. 32 of the Guardian, Philips is called by Steele: "the eldest-born of Spenser's sons". His translations from Sappho had been published in the "Spectator" 1711 with introducing observations by Addison, who remarks of the "Fragment", that it is written in the very spirit of Sappho. Philips was moreover an important and distinguished member of witty and political clubs, and had actually become a man of some renown, both for literary work and political activity.

The great success of Philips' Pastorals and of his play "the Distrest Mother", chiefly brought about by the protection of Addison and Steele, who had in fact praised Philips' works beyond their merit, had excited Pope's jealousy of his fame to the utmost.

On the 27<sup>th</sup> April 1713 Pope published in no. 40 of the Guardian the well-known ironical paper, contrasting his own pastorals with Philips'. With the most artful irony he quotes the weakest passages of Philips' pastorals as his best, and compares them with his own finest lines, and at the end he gives the preference to Philips' pastorals. This severe attack of Pope's may be called the beginning of the fatal antagonism between the two poets which lasted till Pope's death in 1744; for from that time Pope and Philips lived in perpetual enmity. Of course Philips felt the satire keenly, and was highly indignant at Pope's proceedings, who had succeeded in rendering him ridiculous for all time.

Undoubtedly his adversary was too much for him in a battle of wit, so he determined to make use of a coarser kind of weapon, and went so far as to hang up a rod at Button's coffee-house, threatening to chastise Pope with it in public, whenever he should dare to come there again. Pope, who had been a frequent guest at

Button's, kept away thereafter, fearing, no doubt, to find himself unequal to his opponent in an encounter of this nature. But he took his revenge by making Philips ridiculous, whenever he could; many of the bitterest passages in his satires refer to Philips and his poetry.

As Philips is reported by different writers to have been eminent for bravery and skill with the sword, and Pope was only a poor deformed dwarf, Philips seems to show a lack of generosity towards his adversary; but we must consider that Philips, who had no satirical vein in his nature at all, and was a very quiet, reserved man, was unable to defend himself with words and had really no other means of self-defence against so mean and sarcastic an enemy as Pope.

In our days Philips' revenge might appear to us clumsy and unworthy of a man of his social position, but we ought to judge Philips' actions by the standard of the period in which he lived. England during the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was in many respects uncivilized. In the "Spectator" we may read, how in those times Sir Roger de Coverley went to the play. His servants provided themselves with good oaken staves to protect their master from the Mohocks, dissolute young men, very often of good family, who for mere amusement attacked and ill-treated their victims. "Who has not trembled at the Mohock's name?" is an exclamation in Gay's "Trivia, or the art of Walking the Streets of London, 1716".

Men of letters were constantly in danger of chastisement from the poets or politicians whom they had severely criticized. At a later period, when many people felt hurt by his biting satires, Pope is said to have always carried a pistol with him, and taken a large dog for protection, when walking out at Twickenham.

The breach between Pope and Philips speedily widened, and soon Addison was also involved in this quarrel. Though Addison and Pope had a great deal in common, as poets their characters were very far from being congenial; but there had always been a good understanding between them. While Steele, Tickell, Philips and others wrote verses to "the Author of Cato", Pope wrote the famous prologue to Addison's Cato, and Steele inserted it with many compliments to Pope in no. 33 of the Guardian, on the 18<sup>th</sup> April 1713.

It is said that Philips, who was naturally enraged with Pope on account of the ridicule with which he had covered his Pastorals, endeavoured to widen the breach by spreading a report, that Pope had entered into a conspiracy against the Whigs, and that he tried to spoil Addison's reputation. Addison, in his little "senate" at Button's, fearing in Pope a formidable "brother near the throne", seems to have lent a ready ear to these conclusions. It is certain that Addison always had an instinctive dislike to Pope's character, and this dislike increased, when Pope abused Addison's friends. In



the long and bitter quarrel which now broke out between Pope and Addison, the latter always showed his noble, cool and reserved nature, while Pope, on the other side, was all eager sensitiveness and abnormal irritability; reluctant to forgive the slightest injury. I only instance Pope's accusation of Addison in his affair with Tickell in 1715. Thomas Tickell, who is considered the most gifted of Addison's disciples, had translated the first book of the Iliad and published it almost at the same time as Pope's four books of the Iliad appeared. It seems certain, that Tickell did the work himself; Pope, however, considered this as a conspiracy of Addison's against his poetical reputation, and wrote about it to Addison in a great heat, as he himself owned afterwards.

All this hatred against Addison and his circle inspired Pope to write his satire on Atticus of which I quoted some lines previously, page 5. It was not published until 4 years after Addison's death; it is not certain that Addison ever saw it. From a literary point of view this portrait of Atticus is the most brilliant individual passage in Pope's writings, and perhaps in all modern satirical literature; worthy of being compared with passages in Byron's Don Juan.

Till the end of his life Pope continued to ridicule Philips and lost no opportunity of scoffing at him in his satires. He figures in the Bathos and in the Dunciad, as Macer in the Characters and in the instructions to a porter how to find Mr. Curll's authors, he is a "Pindaric writer in red stockings". The following lines, the first half of the Character of Macer,<sup>1)</sup> show clearly, that Macer was meant for Philips.

"When simple Macer, now of high renown,  
First fought<sup>2)</sup> a Poet's Fortune in the Town,  
'Twas all th'Ambition his high soul could feel,  
To wear red stockings, and to dine with Steele.  
Some Ends of verse his Betters might afford,  
And gave the harmless fellow a good word.  
Set up with these, he ventur 'd on the Town,  
And in a borrow 'd Play, out-did poor Crown.  
There he stopp 'd short, nor since has writ a tittle,  
But has the wit to make the most of little;  
Like stunted hide-bound Trees, that just have got  
Sufficient sap at once to bear and rot.  
Now he begs Verse, and what he gets commends,  
Not of the Wits his foes,  
But Fools his friends.

<sup>1)</sup> the Poetical Works of A. Pope, Globe Edition p. 471.

<sup>2)</sup> In Johnson, Lives of the Poets vol. III p. 269 I read "sought".

In March 1728 appeared the third volume of the *Miscellanies*, published by Arbuthnot, Gay, Pope and Swift. Pope's satires in it are full of violent attacks on his old enemies: Theobald, Dennis and Philips, who was in Ireland by that time. It contained, among other satirical pieces by Pope, the *Treatise of the Bathos*, also called "the *Profound*", on the Art of Sinking in Poetry. It is considered the most successful of Pope's prose satires. Herein, as in the *Dunciad*, Philips is one of the chief victims. Already in the preface Pope makes allusions to Philips, saying:

"Martinus Scriblerus had so early relish for the Eastern way of writing, that even at this time he composed (in imitation of it) the *Thousand and one Arabian Tales*, and also the *Persian Tales*, which have been since translated into several languages, and lately into our own with particular elegance, by Mr. Ambrose Philips. In this work of his childhood he was not a little assisted by the historical traditions of his nurse".<sup>1)</sup>

One chapter of the *Bathos* consists merely of stupid personalities; these ridiculed writers are ranged in classes and compared to various species of birds, fishes and reptiles. Pope says in the introduction about it<sup>2)</sup>:

"I shall range these confined and less copious geniuses under proper classes, and (the better to give their pictures to the reader) under the names of animals of some sort or other whereby he will be enabled, at the first sight of such as shall daily come forth, to know to what kind to refer, and with what authors to compare them".

Under each group Pope put the initials of the persons described, and afterward he had the audacity to declare, that the initials were selected at random.

Here we find Philips introduced as a tortoise with the words:

"The Tortoises are slow and chill, and, like pastoral writers delight much in gardens, they have for the most part a fine embroidered shell, and underneath it, a heavy lump.

A. P. W. B. L. E. . . ." <sup>3)</sup>

In the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*,<sup>4)</sup> the Prologue to the *Satires*, in 1735 Pope gives another complimentary portraiture of Philips as a poet:

"The bard whom pilfer'd Pastorals renown;  
Who turns a Persian tale for half a Crown,  
Just writes to make his barrenness appear,  
And strains, from hard-bound brains, eight lines a year".

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<sup>1)</sup> Elwin and Courthope's Edition of A. Pope's Works vol. X p. 294.

<sup>2)</sup> Elwin and Courthope's Edition of A. Pope's Works vol. X p. 361.

<sup>3)</sup> Elwin and Courthope's Edition of A. Pope's Works vol. X p. 362.

<sup>4)</sup> the Poetical Works of A. Pope, Globe Edition p. 276 line 179 ff.

Soon after the Bathos, on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 1728 appeared the *Dunciad*, Pope's masterpiece of satire in some respect. It is addressed to Swift, who probably assisted Pope in it. The satire is also chiefly directed against his literary opponents and enemies. Of course Philips is attacked here also in different lines. This original edition of the *Dunciad* was only in 3 books, the first book opens with a description of the Temple of the Goddess of Dulness, a yawning ruin near Rag Fair. The solemn feast of a Lord Mayor's Day recalls many fond memories to the goddess's mind, her glories in the past and the successes of her distinguished sons: Eusden, Blackmore, Philips, Dennis and others.

"She saw slow Philips creep like Tate's poor page,  
And all the mighty Mad in Dennis rage."<sup>1)</sup>

Theobald fears that the end of the Empire of Dulness is near, owing to the death of Settle. He resolves to devote himself henceforth to the good cause. He builds an altar and is about to offer his books as a sacrifice, when the goddess appears and extinguishes the flames with a sheet of Thule, an unfinished northern poem of Ambrose Philips, of which for many years only one sheet was printed. It may also be an allegorical allusion to Philips' cold and heavy manner of writing. Warton says in his *Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope*:

"the great fault of the *Dunciad* is the excessive vehemence of the satire". Gottfried Herder declares, that the *Dunciad* did more harm to the poet himself in the public opinion than to all the persons he injured in it. Even Dr. Johnson one of Pope's greatest admirers, must confess, that this satire was accepted by the public with very little enthusiasm. Pope himself, on the contrary, had a very high opinion of this work and compares it to the "Satyric Drama" of the antique tragedy. I think, the *Dunciad* is a very bad certificate of Pope's personal character, but a splendid one for his satirical power, which was so great, that as a boy Pope had to be removed from the school in Twyford, after being whipped for satirising the master.

Pope still continued to heap the most provoking ridicule on Philips. In the first edition of his letters, Pope even calls Philips scoundrel, but afterwards he omits the sentence in which the word is used. I found many tales and stories which Pope told Spence and tried to spread elsewhere, with the intention to blacken the characters of Addison and Philips and to exalt his own, but I am afraid going into further details here would lead me too far off from my chief subject.

<sup>1)</sup> The Poetical Works of A. Pope, Globe Edition p. 368 line 105f.

Among other accusations Pope charges Philips with keeping in his possession the subscriptions for Homer delivered to him by the Hanover Club.

Writing to Caryll on the 8<sup>th</sup> June 1714 Pope speaks about this affair. The letter is addressed to the Honourable . . ., but this is a heading occasionally used by Pope in his published Correspondence for letters to Caryll, who was formerly secretary to the consort of James II. Pope writes there as follows:

"Mr. Philips did express himself with much indignation against me one evening at Button's Coffee-house, as I was told, saying that I was entered into a cabal with Dean Swift and others to write against the Whig interest, and in particular to undermine his own reputation and that of his friends, Steele and Addison; but Mr. Philips never opened his lips to my face, on this or any other occasion, though I was almost every night in the same room with him, nor ever offered me any indecorum. Mr. Addison came to me a night or two after Philips had talked in this idle manner, and assured me of his disbelief of what had been said, of the friendship we should always maintain, and desired I would say nothing further of it.

My Lord Halifax did me the honour to stir in this matter, by speaking to several people to obviate a false aspersion, which might have done me no small prejudice with one party. However, Philips did all he could secretly, to continue the report with the Hanover Club, and kept in his hands the subscriptions paid for me to him, as Secretary to that Club, the heads of it have since given him to understand, that they take it ill; but (upon the terms I ought to be with such a man) I would not ask him for this money, but commissioned one of the Players, his equals, to receive it. This is the whole matter, but as to the secret grounds of this malignity, they will make a very pleasant history when we meet. Mr. Congreve and some others have been much diverted with it, and most of the gentlemen of the Hanover Club have made it the subject of their ridicule on their Secretary . . ."

I think, Philips never meant to appropriate the money, he only delayed the gratification of Pope, whose prosperity may have been painful to him. I will only add to this that the many frauds which Pope practised in the publication of his correspondence and the wild passion he shows in this quarrel, throw, in my opinion, such a bad light on his personal character that I stand on the side of Addison and Philips who never lose their dignity, and it is impossible for me to believe these tales which are very often contradictions in themselves.

I must confess that to me, after having tried very hard to understand Pope, his character remains always problematic. He was

seldom without a quarrel, serious or trivial, on his hands, he had many ex-friendships on account of his personal falsehood and malignity; I only mention his behaviour to Lady Mary Montagu. This leads to the conclusion, that his physical defects must have given him these bitter feelings towards mankind. From this point of view Pope would make an interesting subject for the psychologist, in studying the reciprocal effects of body and mind.

How far Pope was right in degrading Philips as a poet, I shall try to show afterwards, when dealing with Philips' tragedies.

### **Third Period of his Life (1724—1748). Philips in Ireland.**

In 1724 Dr. Boulter was made Archbishop of Armagh, and Lord Primate of all Ireland, and so advanced to a high ecclesiastical dignity. He did not forget Philips, the companion of his labours; when in November 1724, he departed for his new post, he took Philips with him to Ireland, to partake of his fortunes. He first made him his secretary, and afterwards enabled him to represent the county of Armagh in the Irish Parliament, procuring him a seat in the Irish House of Commons.

In December 1726 he was nominated Secretary to the Lord Chancellor, and in September 1734 he was created a Judge, according to different other authors, a Registrar of the Prerogative Court in Dublin. It was, no doubt, a profitable change for Philips to go to Ireland under the patronage of Archbishop Boulter, while his sense of his own political worth must have been flattered on being honoured with such political appointments.

During his stay in Ireland Philips wrote among other poems, the Epistle to Lord Carteret, on his departure from Dublin in 1726, and the Odes to the Misses Carteret. He collected Boulter's correspondence, which however, did not appear until 1769.

Even here Philips received considerable attention in the letters of Pope and Swift; the latter often found occasion for special allusion to him referring contemptuously to Philip's position as a dependent upon Boulter. Swift writes to Pope from Dublin on the 26<sup>th</sup> November 1725:

"Mr Philips is fort chancelant whether he shall turn parson or no. But all employments here are engaged or in reversion. Cast wits and cast beaux have a proper sanctuary in the church. Yet we think it a severe judgement that a fine gentleman and so much the finer for hating ecclesiastics, should be a domestic humble retainer to an Irish prelate. He is neither secretary nor gentleman-

usher, yet serves in both capacities. He has published several reasons, why he never came to see me, but the best is, that I have not waited on his lordship. We have had a poem sent from London in imitation of his on Miss Carteret. It is on Miss Harvey, of a day old; and we say and think, it is yours . . ." <sup>1)</sup>

Archbishop Boulter died on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 1742; he left him £ 20 for mourning, and what money he owed him. Up to his death he had remained Philips' true friend; to this Pope hints in his Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot <sup>2)</sup> in 1735.

"Does not one table Bavius still admit?

Still to one Bishop Philips seems a wit?"

In 1748 Philips left Ireland.

### **Fourth Period of his Life (1748—1749). Philips' return to London and his death.**

After Archbishop Boulter's death, Philips remained some years more in Ireland in the enjoyment of his lucrative places; but it seems that he was always longing to spend the last part of his life in his native country. From his appointments Philips was able to purchase an annuity for life of £ 400, then he resigned his posts and left Ireland, and returned to London in the year 1748. Here he must have found that he had survived most of his friends as well as his enemies, and among them his dreaded antagonist Pope; Steele having died in 1729 and Pope in 1744.

In 1748, shortly after his arrival he published a complete edition of his poems, which he dedicated to the Duke of Newcastle, one of the few old friends of his still living, who had always proved a great encourager of polite learning.

In volume 49 page 599, of the "Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle" from 1779, I found the following passage, announcing a new edition of Philips' poems together with Parnell's:

"The next volume contains the works of Parnell and of Ambrose Philips.

In Ambrose Philips there was little need of alteration. He was, towards the close of life, his own editor, and inserted almost all his productions, and one more than all, his "Epigram on the bad Dancers to good Music", which, on the principle of *Redde suum cuique*, we return to the right owner, "I now reclaim (says Mr. Jeffreys in the preface of his works) my stray epigram on the dancers, which has been tossed from one miscellany to another under the successive

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<sup>1)</sup> the real author was H. Carey.

<sup>2)</sup> The Poetical Works of A. Pope, Globe Edition p. 274 line 99 ff.

names of Messrs Philips, Welsted, and Budgell, till at length the inadvertency of the first of these gentlemen did it the honour of a place among his own poems published a little before his death".

The epigram referred to is neither long nor important:

On a Company of bad Dancers to good Musick.

"How ill the motion with the musick suits!

So Orpheus fiddled, and so danc'd the brutes".

I have not succeeded in finding out, whether it is written by Philips or by Jeffreys, in this new edition of 1779, however, this epigram is left out.

Philips certainly had hoped to pass some quiet happy years of old age in London, but he did not long enjoy his fortune and repose. In the following year he was seized with a paralytic affection of which he died on the 18<sup>th</sup> June 1749, in his 74<sup>th</sup> year, at his lodgings near Vauxhall (I found this in different books), or in Hanover street, Hanover square, or in Hanson street, as I have seen stated elsewhere. He was buried in the chapel in South Audley-street.

Of the private and family life of Ambrose Philips hardly anything is known; in spite of all my efforts, I have not been able to find out the smallest detail of it. Here Ambrose Philips shares the lot of several other poets. I am reminded of la Bruyère 1645—1696, and le Sage 1668—1747, two French poets of almost the same epoch, of whose private life also little or nothing is known. Ambrose Philips, the quiet reserved man, has perhaps taken care himself to hide his intimate life from the public and posterity, a warning, one might feel inclined to give to modern poets and people of importance, against the indiscreet manner of some biographers of publishing an author's private affairs directly after his death.

I do not know, if Ambrose Philips had any nearer relations round him, his only relation I came across is mentioned by Philips himself in his works, where I found a fine epitaph at the head of which Philips says:

"the following Epitaph on the monument of my Kinswoman was written at the Request of her Husband". She was the youngest daughter of a certain Robert Philips of Newton-Regis, in the County of Warwick, Esquire.

She died in 1726 in her 36<sup>th</sup> year of age, so she was 15 years younger than our poet, perhaps a niece or a cousin.

In the epitaph she is praised as the best and kindest daughter, wife and mother, when nursing her children in the small-pox, she caught the infection and thus lost her life in a heroic way.

"Triumphing, through resignation,  
Over sickness, pain, anguish, agony,  
Expiring in the fervour of prayer."

I can only give general instances from his works, and imagine that a man, who wrote the beautiful love-scene between Yvor and Gwendolen in "the Briton", who was able to enter so well into Sappho's feelings in translating her love-songs, that are considered as the most passionate and beautiful of all times, who understood Andromache's distress, who in his pastorals describes so well domestic happiness and rural simplicity, and in the Freethinker shows a perfect knowledge of ladies' tastes and interests and gives them very clever advice, must have had all qualities for a true lover, a tender husband, a kind father, brother and son, in short, for a pleasant member of a family-circle. Especially from his charming odes to little children, I feel inclined to imagine him as an affectionate father.

We have seen Philips great in friendship, I refer to his intimate friends at Button's and to another group of his friends, the contributors to the "Freethinker". In his close friendship with all these men superior to himself, Philips receives more than he gives and shows a strong talent for adapting himself to a greater genius. During his life, he is always protected by superior friends in a powerful position.

I think, one could trace here a feminine trait in Philips' nature, as well as in his enmity with Pope, where Philips mostly took a passive part, and in his works, where, as we shall see later, he is greatest in imitating or translating superior geniuses, as Racine, Shakespeare, Spenser, Virgil, Sappho, Anacreon and Pindar.

When following an old truth, which we find expressed in proverbs of all different languages, for instance in English: "birds of a feather flock together", in German: "sage mir, mit wem Du umgehst, und ich will Dir sagen, wer Du bist", we can judge from Philips' intimacy with men like Addison, Steele and Boulter, that Philips must have been of a congenial nature. Also by reading Philips' works, they all deal with noble and sublime subjects and the thoughts expressed are pure and noble, we must come to the conclusion, that he was altogether a man of strong and noble feelings and of honesty of purpose.

Philips had much political passion; he always showed himself an ardent Whig. Macaulay in his "Critical and Historic Essays", vol V p. 112, 3, calls him "a good Whig and a middling poet". Already in 1700, in his 25<sup>th</sup> year, he showed his strong political interest, when writing the life of Archbishop Williams.

Everywhere I found Philips mentioned as a man of quiet and reserved manners, Spence says in his anecdotes p. 344: "Philips never spoke till between eleven and twelve o'clock, nor even then could do it in his own defence". Dr Johnson says in his Lives of the



Poets vol. III p. 268: "Of Philips' personal character all that I have heard is, that he was eminent for bravery and skill in the sword, and that in conversation he was solemn and pompous. He had great sensibility of censure, if judgment may be made by a single story which I heard long ago from Mr. Jng, a gentleman of great eminence in Staffordshire. "Philips", said he, was once at table, when I asked him, "How came the king of Epirus to drive oxen, and to say "I'm goaded on by love"? After which question he never spoke again".

Only in Courthope and Elwin's Edition of Pope's Works vol. V p. 87, I read that Philips was "a great talker, vain, self-conscious, observable for the foppery of his dress and particularly his red stockings". After all my researches, I think, Philips cannot be called "a great talker", and with all due reverence for this excellent edition, I must state, that here the authors did not judge Philips rightly; this is perhaps a mistake, as in other passages they attribute the "Splendid Shilling" and the "Cyder" to our author; they are written by John Philips, who lived from 1676—1709.

About Philips' exterior I cannot say much either; Bromley mentions a portrait of Philips by Ashton, engraved by T. Cooke, but I did not succeed in procuring it. Spence tells us, that Ambrose Philips was of lean make and about 5 feet 7 inches high, a neat dresser and very vain. To this I shall quote an anecdote of Spence's,<sup>1)</sup> that shows us besides, how he once received from Swift a witty rebuke on account of his vanity:

"In a conversation between Philips, Congreve, Swift, and others, the discourse ran a good while on Julius Caesar. After many things had been said to the purpose, Ambrose asked, what sort of person they supposed, Julius Caesar was? He was answered, that from medals, etc., it appeared that he was a small man, and thin-faced. — "Now, for my part" said Ambrose, "I should take him to have been of a lean make, pale complexion, extremely neat in his dress, and five feet, seven inches high", an exact description of Philips himself. Swift, who understood good breeding perfectly well, and would not interrupt anybody while speaking, let him go on, and when he had quite done, said: "And I, Mr. Philips, should take him to have been a plump man, just five feet five inches high; not very neatly dressed, in a black gown, with pudding sleeves".

I think here the Dean gave an exact picture of himself, to ridicule Philips' vanity. Only the height must be a mistake, for Swift was of middling stature.

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<sup>1)</sup> Spence: Anecdotes, Observations and characters of Books and Men p. 375; and Elwin and Courthope's Edition of A. Pope's Works vol. VII p. 62 note 1.

Another instance for Philips' vanity I found in Davies' *Dramatic Miscellanies* vol. III p. 266/67. He says, as follows:

"I will here quote an anecdote relating to him, which I heard from the mouth of Mr. Quin in the green-room of Covent-Garden, the winter when he and Garrick were engaged at that theatre. Mr. Garrick was informing the company, then present, of his acting the part of Orestes, in the "Distrest Mother" at Dublin. "In order", said he, "to gain a more accurate knowledge of the character, I waited on the author, Ambrose Philips, who lived not far from the metropolis. I begged him to inform me particularly concerning his intention in the mad-scene of Orestes. Philips told me, that, during his writing that part of the play, he was like a person out of his mind; that he was so carried away by his enthusiastic rapture, that, when his friend, Mr. Addison, came into the room, he did not know him; and that, as soon as he recovered from his fit, he said to him, — What, Ioe, is it you? — that, said Quin, was to let you know, how familiar he was with Mr. Addison".

After having read Addison's and Steele's cordial and familiar letters to Philips, I think, it must have been quite natural to Philips to call these friends by their Christian names; and I think, Mr. Quin wronged Philips with his suspicion. I only quote the conclusion of Addison's letter to Philips on the 25<sup>th</sup> April 1710, "Farewell, dear Philips, and believe me to be, more than I am able to express, Your most affectionate and most faithful humble servant

Joseph Addison".

On the whole Philips was a man of noble character, though rather ludicrously solemn and pompous in his person and conversation. It is perhaps mostly by Addison's friendship and Pope's enmity, that he was raised to temporary importance. While on one side Pope and his friends Swift and Gay, and Harry Carey exposed him to an unmerited depreciation, on the other Steele and Addison in their efforts to help the luckless poet by their highest appreciation, also harmed him, though unwillingly.

We must state, that Philips became ridiculous without his own fault, by the sometimes absurd admiration of his friends, who praised him too much, beyond his merit, and roused in this way the contradiction of his adversaries, who happened to be the greatest satirists of their time, perhaps of English literature, and of course had all the laugh on their side.

Of Philips' literary worth in particular I shall speak in the next part of my essay, when I have tried to give a true account of his tragedies, showing them in the right light with their faults and merits.

I think, Philips shares somewhat the lot of Schiller's Wallenstein:

„Von der Parteien Gunst und Haß entsteht,  
Schwankt sein Charakterbild in der Geschichte“.

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## Part II.

### Philips' Tragedies.

Speaking of Philips' work, I shall chiefly consider him as a dramatic author, as he is most important in this line. He produced three tragedies: the *Distrest Mother* 1712, the *Briton* 1722, and *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester* 1723. These three tragedies were jointly printed and edited by J. Tonson 1725.

The most successful of these was the *Distrest Mother*, the first piece he brought on the stage. As it is chronologically and also with regard to success the first of Philips' plays, I shall begin to deal with it.

#### 1. The *Distrest Mother*.

Baker<sup>1)</sup> says about it: "As a dramatic writer, our author has certainly considerable merit. All his pieces of that kind met with success, and one of them is still a standard of entertainment at the theatres".

Dr. Johnson<sup>2)</sup> does not think so much of Philips as a dramatist, he says: "Of 'the Distressed Mother' not much is pretended to be his own, and therefore it is no subject of criticism: his other two tragedies, I believe, are not below mediocrity, nor above it".

The *Distrest mother* is an adaptation of Racine's *Andromaque*, therefore I think it necessary to give here some introductory remarks about the influence of French literature upon English.

There are decidedly 2 great periods in particular during which the creations and also the critical principles of the French dominated those of the English authors. The first period reaches from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer, that is from about the year 1100 till about 1430; the second period began in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, in the age of Dryden, and continued till the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the times of Robert Burns, that is from about 1660 to 1780.

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<sup>1)</sup> *Biographia Dramatica*, ed. 1812, vol. I p. 569.

<sup>2)</sup> Dr. Johnson, *Lives of the Poets* vol. III p. 268.

To the second period belong besides Racine and Corneille also particularly Molière, Boileau and Voltaire. The French influence is manifest in Dryden and Pope, and in the prose of Johnson, it is easy to trace in Addison and Steele and in their essays.

I will not tire my readers with giving a long list of English literary works that have their sources in French originals; I shall only mention some tragedies of Ambrose Philips' time that show French influence or are directly adapted from a French model as Philips' "Distrest Mother". There is first the "Cato" of Addison, Philips' friend and master, it appeared in the year 1713 and is the very typical drama of the Classics following the rule of the unities of time, of place and of action, it contains the development of but one action and proceeds in the same place and in the same time.

I shall here, as later on, quote passages from French writers: it seems to me very interesting to hear their opinion about this French influence. L. Charlanne<sup>1)</sup> says:

"Addison se rapprocha aussi du genre racinien. Sous l'influence de la critique et des idées françaises, il se rallia franchement aux théories classiques et composa une tragédie, *Caton*, conçue d'après les règles posées par nos auteurs français. Persuadé que la terreur et la pitié étaient indispensables à une tragédie et que la vertu ne peut pas être toujours récompensée, il mit à la scène *Caton*, l'honnête homme luttant contre l'adversité. A l'exemple de Corneille et de Racine, il voulut que la pensée soutînt l'expression, contrairement à l'exemple de ses compatriotes chez qui l'expression seule était majestueuse et revêtait mal une pensée enfantine ou banale. Et joignant l'exemple au précepte, il risqua *Caton* sur la scène. Ce fut un succès; mais ce fut surtout un succès politique; les allusions qu'on y vit soutinrent la pièce, et l'esprit de parti en assura le triomphe, d'ailleurs sans lendemain".

As we shall see afterwards, in the last mentioned point Philips followed his master Addison in his tragedy *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester*, where he has many political and clerical allusions. Shortly before the first performance of *Cato* in April 1713, had been signed the treaty of Utrecht, which had realized all the wishes of the Tories. In *Cato* and his adherents Addison paints his own liberal Whigparty, hoping to win the nation for his party by the representation of *Cato*, the Champion of Freedom. Caesar and his followers are of course the representatives of the Tories. Addison compares the two parties and shows his own party in the best light. The piece was highly praised by the Whigs, but the Tories were wise enough not to take

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<sup>1)</sup> L. Charlanne, *l'Influence Française en Angleterre au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris 1906, vol. II, le Théâtre et la Critique p. 239/40.

notice of the hints about their faults. So the piece was praised by all. For a long time "Cato" was considered Addison's masterpiece and the English tragedy continued in the way taken by Addison with so much success in his "Cato". As I stated on page 8, Ambrose Philips<sup>1)</sup> and different other poets wrote verses to the author of Cato. The dramatists altered the character of their plays, they gave up the wild extravagances of former times and turned to imitating the tamer manner of the Classic Greek and French tragedians. Addison and his adherents warmly supported this new style of drama by reason of taste, friendship and Whig party spirit, but, as we shall see afterwards, the French style never took hold of the English imagination.

Racine was of course the chief subject of attention. Racine possesses all the French characteristics: the French virtues, as elegance, a polished style and noble sense, as well as the French defects of servility to rule, coldness and monotony. Soon, almost all Racine's masterpieces were adapted for the English stage: In 1675 appeared the first adaptation of Racine's *Andromaque*, attributed to Crowne.

In 1677 Crowne published the "Destruction of Jerusalem, this piece contains the love-scenes between Titus and Berenice, shortened from Racine's *Bérénice*, published in 1670; in the same year appeared Titus and Berenice by Otway, a translation of Racine's *Bérénice* into English heroic verse.

In 1678 appeared "Mithridates" by Nathaniel Lee; it is a free imitation of Racine's play and is written in blankverse. Lee, like Ambrose Philips in his tragedies, only uses rhyme at the end of the acts.

In 1699 Abel Boyer, a Frenchman by birth, adapted Racine's *Iphigénie* into English with the title "Achilles or Iphigenia in Aulis" it was represented at Drury Lane.

In 1707 Edmund Smith combined a play from Racine's "Phèdre" and "Bajazet", entitled "Phaedra and Hippolytus", it was represented at the Haymarket Theatre.

In 1712 Ambrose Philips' "Distrest Mother" appeared on the stage.

In 1714 Alexander the Great and Britannicus were translated by I Ozell, who is well-known by his numerous translations and said to have been master of most living languages.

In 1667 Racine's *Andromaque* was acted for the first time in Paris, and adaptations and translations of it soon appeared on almost all foreign stages. In 1675 the English had a translation in prose of Racine's *Andromaque* and soon it was followed by translations in

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<sup>1)</sup> A. Philips' Poems, London 1765 p. 127 "To Mr. Addison on Cato".

Holland and in Italy. *Andromache* was the first tragedy of Racine that appeared on the English stage. The following lines about this play I read in Theophile Cibber's *Lives of the Poets of Great Britain and Ireland* vol. III p. 109. \*

"*Andromache*, a Tragedy, acted at the duke's theatre in Covent-Garden, 1675. This play was only a translation of Mr. Racine, by a young gentleman, chiefly in prose, and published by Mr. Crown. It was brought upon the stage, but without success."

I shall also quote here the statement of L. Charlanne.<sup>1)</sup>

"Racine comme Corneille, passa en Angleterre. La première oeuvre traduite et jouée fut *Andromaque*, en 1675. On aurait pu s'attendre à une traduction soignée qui aurait permis de saisir, autant qu'il se peut, toute la pensée de Racine. Il n'en fut rien: c'est par une version des plus médiocres que les Anglais apprirent à connaître notre plus grand poète tragique. Un jeune homme, épris d'*Andromaque*, comme il l'était d'ailleurs des pièces françaises en général, entreprit de faire partager son admiration à ses compatriotes: il traduisit la plus tendre peut-être des oeuvres de Racine. La pièce fut jouée au théâtre du duc d'York, sans grand succès. La faute en est au traducteur sans doute, peut-être aussi au public anglais, mais surtout à Crowne, poète dramatique lui-même, qui, sur la demande de son jeune ami, s'était chargé de revoir et de mettre au point la traduction d'*Andromaque*. On peut aisément s'en convaincre en lisant l'épître au lecteur: « Cette pièce, dit Crowne, a été traduite par un jeune homme qui a une grande estime pour toutes les pièces françaises et particulièrement pour celle-ci: pensant que c'était dommage que la ville perdît un divertissement aussi excellent faute d'une traduction, il y a donné tous ses soins; et comme elle se trouvait être entre mes mains pendant les grandes vacances, époque à laquelle les théâtres sont disposés à s'accrocher au moindre roseau pour ne pas sombrer, afin de rendre service au théâtre et d'obliger le jeune homme qui semblait être désireux de voir la pièce paraître sur la scène, je l'ai parcourue volontiers, mais je me suis aperçu qu'elle ne méritait pas les éloges qu'en faisait ce gentilhomme et que le talent de versificateur de celui-ci n'était pas très heureux; et cependant ni l'une ni l'autre ne méritaient un dédain absolu. Comme ni le gentilhomme ni moi-même n'avions le loisir de faire les modifications que demandaient et la pièce et les vers, je lui demandai la permission de la mettre en prose; je l'obtins, et c'est dans cet état que vous la voyez. Si la pièce manque de fantaisie, c'est l'auteur même que vous devez blâmer... Cependant, pour ne pas nuire au libraire, je lui rendrai justice, ainsi qu' à la pièce, en disant que celle-ci est

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<sup>1)</sup> L. Charlanne, *l'Influence* ... p. 141—143.

loin d'être la plus mauvaise des pièces françaises. Elle est très estimée en France et ici aussi, par quelques Anglais, qui sont admirateurs de l'esprit français et pensent qu' il a beaucoup perdu en passant dans cette traduction. Je ne puis dire en quoi, si ce n'est que je n'ai pas mis cette pièce en vers, mais c'est parce que j'ai pensé qu'elle n'en valait pas la peine; autrement il y a, mot à mot, tout ce qui se trouve dans la pièce française, et même un peu plus, comme on pourra le voir au dernier acte, où ce qui est rapporté en un récit ennuyeux dans la pièce française est ici représenté, ce qui n'est pas un mince avantage. Mais, pour que ces messieurs, quelsqu' ils soient, goûtent le plaisir de leur opinion, je me hasarderai à affirmer que cette pièce méritait de plaire davantage, et que si elle avait été représentée au bon vieux temps où le Cid, Héraclius et les autres pièces françaises furent tant applaudies, elle aurait très bien passé; mais depuis que nos spectateurs ont goûté si abondamment la solidité de l'esprit anglais, ils ne peuvent plus avaler ces maigres régals. Voilà ce que j'ai cru bon de dire, tant pour la pièce que pour moi-même, afin de me disculper du scandale de cette pauvre traduction qu'on m'a malicieusement attribuée, malgré tout ce que j'ai pu dire en particulier, malgré ce que le prologue et l'épilogue ont affirmé en public sur la scène—et ils étaient écrits au nom du traducteur, afin que si la pièce obtenait quelque succès, il pût en prendre pour lui-même toute la gloire que je n'ambitionnais pas le moins du monde."

I am sorry I did not succeed in procuring the original English text of Crowne's "Epistle to the Reader". I have quoted it here, because it shows clearly, why this first effort to bring Racine's *Andromaque* on the English stage could not be successful. Of course it was John Crowne's fault for the greater part. The form of the play was spoilt: the first part of it is written in prose, while from the middle of the fourth act to the end it is in rhymed alexandrines.

Before I speak of Ambrose Philips' "Distrest Mother", I shall go into a few details about Edmund Smith's "Phaedra and Hippolytus" as I found it often compared with Ambrose Philips' "Distrest Mother". For instance I read in "Cambridge History", vol. IX p. 183, that it "bears about the same relation to Phædre as Philips' "Distrest Mother" to *Andromaque*". And Courthope says in his *History of English Poetry* p. 430:

"Following on the same lines Ambrose Philips by a slight transformation, altered Racine's *Andromaque* into his own *Distrest Mother*, which was acted at Drury Lane in 1712". Addison had written the prologue for Smith's piece and done all he could to promote its success. When the play was coldly received and only acted four times, he ascribed its ill-success to the bad taste of the audience

and to their predilection for Italian opera. In the "Spectator", No 18, of Wednesday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, Addison says: "If the Italians have a genius for music above the English, the English have a genius for other performances of a much higher nature, and capable of giving the mind a much nobler entertainment. Would one think it was possible (at a time when an author lived that was able to write the *Phædra* and *Hippolitus*) for a people to be so stupidly fond of the Italian opera, as scarce to give a third day's hearing to that admirable tragedy? Music is certainly a very agreeable entertainment: But if it would take the intire possession of our ears, if it would make us incapable of hearing sense, if it would exclude arts that have a much greater tendency to the refinement of human nature; I must confess I would allow it no better quarter than Plato has done, who banishes it out of his commonwealth".

I shall state Cibber's judgment<sup>1)</sup>:

"In the year 1707 Edmund Smith's Tragedy called *Phædra* and *Hippolitus* was acted at the Theatre-Royal. This play was introduced upon the stage, at a time when the Italian Opera so much engrossed the attention of the polite world, that sense was sacrificed to sound. It was dress'd and decorated at an extraordinary expense: and inimitably performed in all its parts by Betterton, Booth, Barry, and Oldfield. Yet it brought but few and slender audiences. — to say truth 'twas a fine Poem; but not an extraordinary Play. Notwithstanding the intrinsic merit of this piece, and the countenance it met with from the most ingenious men of the age, yet it languished on the stage and was soon neglected. Mr. Addison wrote the Prologue, in which he rallies the vitiated taste of the public, in preferring the unideal entertainment of an Opera, to the genuine sense of a British Poet".

Dr. Johnson's opinion is as follows<sup>2)</sup>:

"Addison has, in the "Spectator" mentioned the neglect of Smith's tragedy as disgraceful to the nation, and imputes it to the fondness for operas then prevailing. The authority of Addison is great; yet the voice of the people, when to please the people is the purpose, deserves regard. In this question I cannot but think the people in the right. The fable is mythological, a story which we are accustomed to reject as false; and the manners are so distant from our own, that we know them not from sympathy, but by study: the ignorant do not understand the action; the learned reject it as a school-boy's tale — incredulus odi. What I cannot for a moment believe, I cannot for a moment behold with interest or anxiety. The sentiments

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<sup>1)</sup> Theophile Cibber, *Lives of the English Poets* vol. IV p. 306.

<sup>2)</sup> Johnson, *Lives of the Poets* II p. 53.



thus remote from life are removed yet further by the diction, which is too luxuriant and splendid for dialogue, and envelopes the thoughts rather than displays them. It is a scholar's play, such as may please the reader rather than the spectator; the work of a vigorous and elegant mind, accustomed to please itself with its own conceptions, but of little acquaintance with the course of life".

Charlanne<sup>1)</sup> calls this play a:

"Tentative sans succès. Quatre représentations, et ce fut tout. La pièce tombe à plat, au grand scandale d'Addison, qui en avait écrit le prologue et s'accommodait fort bien d'une tragédie à la manière classique. Quatre ans plus tard, il protestait encore contre le mauvais goût du public . . . L'échec de Phèdre restait, aux yeux d'Addison, une honte pour son pays", and on page 154 he says:

"Ce qui causa surtout l'échec de Phèdre en Angleterre, c'est, il faut le déclarer franchement, que Racine avait écrit cette tragédie et que les Anglais n'ont jamais eu la tête racinienne".

After having quoted these judgments, I feel most inclined to share Johnson's opinion, that the chief reason for the little success of the play must be sought in its strange plot, so little familiar to the public at large. While Smith's play was acted only four times in 1707, Philips' *Distrest Mother* held the stage for a long time and has been repeatedly reproduced, even in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As both plays were protected by Addison, I think, Philips' *Distrest Mother* must indeed have had much more attraction for the public. Th. Cibber<sup>2)</sup> says in 1753 about the *Distrest Mother*:

"This play was acted first in the year 1711, with every advantage a play could have. Pyrrhus was performed by Mr. Booth, a part in which he acquired great reputation. Orestes was given to Mr. Powell, and Andromache was excellently personated by the inimitable Mrs. Oldfield. Nor was Mrs. Porter beheld in Hermione without admiration. The *Distress'd Mother* is so often acted, and so frequently read, we shall not trouble the reader with giving any further account of it.

A modern critic speaking of this play, observes that the distress of Andromache moves an audience more than that of Belvidera,<sup>3)</sup> who is as amiable a wife, as Andromache is an affectionate mother; their circumstances though not similar, are equally interesting, and yet, says he, "the female part of the audience is more disposed to weep for the suffering mother, than the suffering wife". The reason 'tis imagined is this, there are more affectionate mothers in the world than wives".

<sup>1)</sup> Charlanne, *l'Influence* . . . II 153.

<sup>2)</sup> Cibber's *Lives* V p. 134.

<sup>3)</sup> Belvidera figures in "*Venice Preserved*" by Thomas Otway 1741.

According to Genest<sup>1)</sup> the Distrest Mother was acted on the following dates:

At Drury Lane:

Genest, vol. II	p. 496.	For the first time 17 <sup>th</sup> March 1712, it was then acted about 9 times and afterwards: 13 <sup>th</sup> April 1722.
„ IV	p. 239.	10 <sup>th</sup> and 15 <sup>th</sup> March 1748.
„ IV	p. 343.	10 <sup>th</sup> December 1751.
„ IV	p. 403.	29 <sup>th</sup> October 1754, acted 4 or 5 times.
„ V	p. 64.	8 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> December 1764.
„ V	p. 447.	6 <sup>th</sup> February 1775 5 times.
„ VI	p. 183.	29 <sup>th</sup> March 1781, by particular desire.
„ VI	p. 382.	4 <sup>th</sup> March 1786.
„ VII	p. 531.	6 <sup>th</sup> January 1802.
„ VIII	p. 975.	22 <sup>nd</sup> October 1818.

In Covent-Garden:

Genest, vol. III	p. 459.	January 16 <sup>th</sup> 1735, acted but twice.
„ IV	p. 41.	November 29 <sup>th</sup> 1742.
„ IV	p. 217.	April 4 <sup>th</sup> 1747.
„ IV	p. 333.	December 18 <sup>th</sup> and 20 <sup>th</sup> 1750.
„ IV	p. 373.	April 26 <sup>th</sup> and 30 <sup>th</sup> 1753.
„ V	p. 459.	January 7 <sup>th</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 11 <sup>th</sup> , 14 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> 1775.
„ VI	p. 89.	November 19 <sup>th</sup> , 20 <sup>th</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup> 1778, not acted 3 years.
„ VII	p. 617.	December 21 <sup>st</sup> 1803.
„ VIII	p. 600.	September 16 <sup>th</sup> 1816, acted 3 times <sup>2)</sup> .

With these dates Genest gives the personalities; here we read the names of the best actors of those times, among others Mr. Powell as Orestes — Mills as Pylades — Booth, Quin and Ross as Pyrrhus — Mrs. Oldfield and Mrs. Cibber as Andromache — Mrs. Woffington and Mrs. Porter as Hermione.

These are the performances of the "Distrest Mother" in England, stated by Genest; in vol. V p. 459 he says:

"This theme was revived at both theatres in opposition — the advantage was certainly at Covent Garden, it is still revived now-a-days". As I stated above (page 18) I read in Davies' Dramatic Miscellanies, that the "Distrest Mother" was also represented at Dublin with Garrick acting the part of Orestes. In vol. IX p. 69 Genest gives the following description of a rendering of the "Distrest

<sup>1)</sup> Genest, some account of the English Stage from the Restauration in 1660 to 1830, Bath 1832.

Mother" with Kean playing the part of Orestes at Bath on January 5<sup>th</sup> 1820:

"The performance on this evening was remarkably bad — Kean was very imperfect and very flat till the last act, even then he did not exert himself much — Mrs. Pope was taken ill, and her part was read — Kean and Warde had decorated themselves with a considerably (sic) quantity of white ribbon — this was doubtless done at Kean's suggestion — Orestes and Pyrrhus never saw a bit of silk in their lives — but what of that — their representations on the modern stage had seen plenty".

I shall now compare Philips' work with the original, to find out, how far it differs and what is Philips' own work. The critics are of different opinion about it. I shall quote some, Cibber<sup>1)</sup> says:

"The first piece Philips brought upon the stage, was his *Distress'd Mother*, translated from the French of Monsieur Racine, but not without such deviations Mr. Philips thought necessary to heighten the distress; for writing to the heart is a secret which the best of the French poets have not found out".

Genest<sup>2)</sup> judges Philips' play as follows:

"This Tragedy is taken from Racine — it was adapted to the English stage by Philips — it is a dull play, for what can be more dull than four principal characters with their four confidants, who come on and go off, talk a great deal and do nothing till the last act? — Philips has deviated from history — he has not given the characters Grecian manners, nor does his language make up by any means for other deficiencies — in short this Tragedy has no one circumstance to recommend it, except that it affords scope for good acting — the word *Madam* occurs 54 times".

Charlanne<sup>3)</sup> states thus:

"Ce fut Ambrose Philips qui s'y risqua en publiant une traduction assez libre d'*Andromaque* ayant pour titre les *"Angoisses d'une Mère"*. La préface était l'exposition des idées les plus saines en matière de style et de composition classiques".

Like Racine Philips introduces his *"Distrest Mother"* with a preface; there he expresses his opinion about style by the following words:

"In all the Works of Genius and Invention, whether in Verse or Prose, there are in general but three Manners of Style; the one sublime and full of Majesty; the other simple, natural, and easie; and the third, swelling, forced, and unnatural: An injudicious Affec-

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<sup>1)</sup> Cibber, *Lives* . . . V, 134.

<sup>2)</sup> Genest II, 496.

<sup>3)</sup> Charlanne, p. 143.

tation of Sublimity is what betrayed a great many Authors into the latter; not considering that real Greatness in Writing, as well as in Manners, consists in an unaffected Simplicity. The true Sublime does not lie in strained Metaphors, and the Pomp of Words; but rises out of noble Sentiments and strong Images of Nature; which will always appear the more conspicuous, when the Language does not swell to hide and overshadow them.

These are the Considerations, that have induced me to write this Tragedy in a Style very different from what has been usually practised amongst us in Poems of this Nature. I have had the Advantage to copy after a very great Master, whose Writings are deservedly admired in all Parts of Europe, and whose Excellencies are too well known to the Men of Letters in this Nation, to stand in need of any farther Discovery of them here. If I have been able to keep up to the Beauties of Monsieur Racine in my Attempt, and to do him no Prejudice in the Liberties I have taken frequently to vary from so great a Poet, I shall have no Reason to be dissatisfied with the Labour it has cost me to bring the compleatest of his Works upon the English Stage".

In the fine Prologue that was written by Richard Steele and spoken by Mr. Wilks, the well-known actor, Steele pronounces the same predilection for the classic school in poetry and praises it still higher. What he says about Shakespeare's liberties in writing compared with minor authors, I think, could be expressed by a short Latin proverb: "Quod licet Jovi, non licet bovi". Steele closes his prologue with high praise for Philips' *Andromache*, saying that she is equal to her sublime model and is sure to be admired by a cultured audience. I shall quote what Bernardin<sup>1)</sup> says about the original:

"... Le rôle d'Andromaque est écrit d'un tout autre style que ceux de Pyrrhus, Oreste et Hermione . . . Ne nous étonnons donc pas si tous trois ont du penchant pour les abstractions; s'ils font un abus incroyable du mot yeux . . . Andromaque, au contraire, ne porte en rien la marque de l'époque. Tout est simplicité et grâce dans les vers que lui prête le poète; la princesse captive emploie les tournures les plus usuelles, celles qui se présentent d'elles-mêmes sur toutes les lèvres, quelle que soit l'éducation qu'elles aient reçue; aucune recherche, aucune affectation de pompe; le charme de ce langage consiste précisément dans sa pureté naturelle et dans son aisance noble; c'est bien là l'élégance familière du style de la tragédie attique, et c'est en cela que l'on a pu dire avec raison que

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<sup>1)</sup> Bernardin, "Théâtre Complet de Jean Racine", Notice sur *Andromaque* p. 281.

l'Andromaque de Racine était une tragédie grecque. Le style dans lequel est écrit le rôle d'Andromaque est comme les sentiments qu'elle exprime: il ne porte pas de date. Il est tellement lié aux pensées qu'il rend, qu'il semble qu'on ne pourrait les rendre autrement. C'est peut-être de tout le théâtre de Racine le rôle qui vieillira le moins."

I think, it is worth while to quote here Steele's excellent prologue, that decidedly has contributed to Philips' great success.

"Since Fancy of it self is loose and vain,  
The Wise by Rules that airy Power restrain:  
They think those Writers mad, who at their Ease  
Convey this House and Audience when they please;  
Who Nature's stated Distances confound,  
And make this Spot all Soils the Sun goes round:  
'Tis nothing, when a fancy'd Scene's in view,  
To skip from Covent-Garden to Peru.  
But Shakespear's self transgress'd; and shall each Elf,  
Each Pigmy Genius, quote Great Shakespear's self!  
What Critick dares prescribe what's just and fit,  
Or mark out Limits for such boundless Wit!  
Shakespear could travel thro'Earth, Sea and Air,  
And paint out all the Powers and Wonders there.  
In barren Desarts He makes Nature smile,  
And gives us Feasts in his Enchanted Isle.  
Our author does his feeble Force confess,  
Nor dares pretend such Merit to transgress;  
Does not such shining Gifts of Genius share,  
And therefore makes Propriety his Care.  
Your Tread with study'd Decency he serves;  
Not only Rules of Time and Peace preserves,  
But strives to keep his Characters intire,  
With French Correctness and with British Fire.  
This Piece presented in a Foreign Tongue,  
When France was Glorious, and her Monarch young,  
A hundred times a crowded Audience drew;  
A hundred times repeated, still 'twas new.  
Pyrrhus provok'd, to no wild Rants betray'd,  
Resents his generous Love so ill repay'd;  
Does like a Man resent, a Prince upbraid.  
His sentiments disclose a Royal Mind,  
Nor is he known a King from Guards behind.  
Injur'd Hermione demands Relief;  
But not from heavy Narratives of Grief:  
In conscious Majesty her Pride is shewn;

Born to avenge her Wrongs, but not bemoan.  
Andromache — If in our Author's Lines,  
As in the great Original, she shines,  
Nothing but from Barbarity she fears.  
Attend with Silence; you'll applaud with Tears."

Racine dedicates his *Andromaque* in the most flattering terms to "Madame", that is to "Henriette-Anne d'Angleterre, duchesse d'Orléans", daughter to Charles I of England and Henriette-Marie de France. There was some likeness in the fate of this noble princess and that of *Andromaque*; Bernardin<sup>1)</sup> also states this:

"L'*Andromaque* de Racine a cette grâce noble et chaste, et cette résignation plaintive. Ce n'est plus la captive livrée aux brutales amours de Pyrrhus; c'est une princesse détrônée à la cour d'un roi voisin; en écrivant ce rôle dans une tragédie dédiée à Henriette d'Angleterre, Racine songeait à Henriette de France, réfugiée à la cour de Louis XIV; *Andromaque* est traitée en Epire avec tous les égards dus à son rang".

Philips likewise dedicates his "Distrest Mother" to a lady, the Duchess of Montague, daughter to the Duke of Marlborough. When comparing these two dedications, I found a great resemblance, Philips ascribes to the Duchess of Montague the same qualities that distinguish "Madame", but Philips goes much further in his personal flatteries, saying in his dedication:

"The Name of Hector could not be more terrible to the Greeks, than that of the Duke of Marlborough has been to the French.

The refined Taste You are known to have in all Entertainments for the Diversion of the Publick, and the peculiar Life and Ornament Your Presence gives to all Assemblies, was no small Motive to determine me in the Choice of my Patroness. The Charms, that shine out in the Person of Your Grace, may convince every one, that there is nothing unnatural in the Power, which is ascribed to the Beauty of *Andromache*".

In my opinion, Philips exaggerates here too much especially in the latter quotation.

I think, the story of *Andromache* is so well-known to all my readers, that I should tire them, were I to give them here a very precise statement of the contents of our tragedy. *Andromache*, the heroine, is a famous personage in the literature of the Ancients. Homer represents her as the type of conjugal and motherly love. We find the story of *Andromache* in two Greek tragedies. Euripides shows us *Andromache* trembling for the life of a beloved son in his "*Andromache*" and in his "*Trojans*". In Latin literature we find

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<sup>1)</sup> Bernardin, . . . Notice sur Andr. p. 273.

Andromache in the "Trojans" by Seneca and in the third book of Virgil's Aeneid. The sources of Racine's *Andromaque* we find partly in Euripides, partly in Virgil. Racine is chiefly inspired by Virgil's work, whose Andromache is as pure a character as Racine's.

In a few words I shall give the summary of Euripides' *Andromache*: After the ruin of Troy, Andromache, Hector's consort, becomes prisoner of Pyrrhus, son to Achilles. Hermione, Pyrrhus' consort, hates Andromache; mad with jealousy she intends to kill Andromache and Molossos, son of Pyrrhus and Andromache, in the King's absence. Menelaus, Hermione's father, helps her, but Peleus, Achilles' father, delivers Andromache and her son from her hands. Now Hermione fears Pyrrhus' rage and flees away with Orestes, who, at her request, kills Pyrrhus. Then Peleus gives Andromache in marriage to Helenus, Hector's brother.

Racine introduces love into Euripides' work and so changes this cold tragedy into the most passionate drama. As Racine says in his second preface, he has derived this idea mostly from Virgil. Racine is a disciple of the Ancients and at the same time a modern poet; he knows how to combine all the terrors of the ancient play with the delicacy and sense of propriety of modern times. In his two prefaces Racine speaks about his sources and how he changed them as follows:

In his first preface<sup>1)</sup> he says:

"Virgile, au troisième livre de l'Enéide. C'est Enée qui parle :

Littoraque Epiri legimus, portuque subimus  
 Chaonio, et celsam Buthroti ascendimus urbem.  
 Solemnes tum forte dapes et tristia dona  
 Libabat cineri Andromache, Manesque vocabat  
 Hectoreum ad tumulum, viridi quem cespite inanem,  
 Et geminas, causam lacrimis, sacraverat aras . . .  
 Dejecit vultum, et demissa voce locuta est:  
 «O felix una ante alias Priameïa virgo,  
 Hostilem ad tumulum Trojae sub moenibus altis  
 Jussa mori! quae sortitus non pertulit ullos,  
 Nec victoris heri tetigit captiva cubile.  
 Nos patria incensa, diversa per aequora vectae,  
 Stirpis Achilleae fastus, juvenemque superbum,  
 Servitio enixae, tulimus, qui deinde secutus  
 Ledaëam Hermionem, Lacedaemoniosque hymenaeos.  
 Ast illum, ereptae magnò inflammatus amore  
 Conjugis, et scelerum Furiis agitatus, Orestes  
 Excipit incautum, patriasque obtruncat ad aras».

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<sup>1)</sup> Théâtre Complet de Jean Racine, Edition par N. M. Bernardin Tome I  
 p. 288—290.

Voilà, en peu de vers, tout le sujet de cette tragédie. Voilà le lieu de la scène, l'action qui s'y passe, les quatre principaux acteurs, et même leurs caractères. Excepté celui d'Hermione, dont la jalousie et les emportements sont assez marqués dans l'Andromaque d'Euripide.

Mais véritablement mes personnages sont si fameux dans l'antiquité, que pour peu qu'on la connaisse, on verra fort bien que je les ai rendus tels que les anciens poètes nous les ont donnés. Aussi n'ai-je pas pensé qu'il me fût permis de rien changer à leurs moeurs. Toute la liberté que j'ai prise, ç'a été d'adoucir un peu la férocité de Pyrrhus, que Sénèque dans sa Troade, et Virgile, dans le second livre de l'Enéide, ont poussée beaucoup plus loin que je n'ai cru le devoir faire.

Encore s'est-il trouvé des gens qui se sont plaints qu'il s'emportât contre Andromaque, et qu'il voulût épouser cette captive à quelque prix que ce fût. J'avoue qu'il n'est pas assez résigné à la volonté de sa maîtresse, et que Céladon a mieux connu que lui le parfait amour. Mais que faire? Pyrrhus n'avait pas lu nos romans. Il était violent de son naturel. Et tous les héros ne sont pas faits pour être des Céladons."

In his second preface<sup>1)</sup> Racine repeats the first part of the first and speaking about the Hermione of Euripides, he adds:

"C'est presque la seule chose que j'emprunte ici de cet auteur. Car, quoique ma tragédie porte le même nom que la sienne, le sujet en est pourtant très-différent. Andromaque, dans Euripide, craint pour la vie de Molossus, qui est un fils qu'elle a eu de Pyrrhus et qu'Hermione veut faire mourir avec sa mère. Mais ici il ne s'agit point de Molossus. Andromaque ne connaît point d'autre mari qu'Hector, ni d'autre fils qu'Astyanax. J'ai cru en cela me conformer à l'idée que nous avons maintenant de cette princesse. La plupart de ceux qui ont entendu parler d'Andromaque ne la connaissent guère que pour la veuve d'Hector et pour la mère d'Astyanax. On ne croit point qu'elle doive aimer ni un autre mari, ni un autre fils. Et je doute que les larmes d'Andromaque eussent fait sur l'esprit de mes spectateurs l'impression qu'elles y ont faite, si elles avaient coulé pour un autre fils que celui qu'elle avait d'Hector.

Il est vrai que j'ai été obligé de faire vivre Astyanax un peu plus qu'il n'a vécu; mais j'écris dans un pays où cette liberté ne pouvait pas être mal reçue".

Philips says in his preface:

"I shall trouble my Reader no farther, than to give him some short Hints relating to this Play from the Preface of the French

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<sup>1)</sup> Théâtre Complet de J. Racine, . . . p. 291/92.



Author. The following Lines of Virgil mark out the Scene, the Action, and the four principal Actors in this Tragedy, together with their distinct Characters; excepting that of Hermione, whose Rage and Jealousie is sufficiently painted out in the *Andromache* of Euripides". Then follow the lines from Virgil, *Aen. lib. 3* quoted by Racine.

Philips continues:

"The great Concern of *Andromache*, in the Greek Poet, is for the Life of *Molossus*, a Son she had by *Pyrrhus*. But it is more conformable to the general Notion we form of that Princess, at this great Distance of Time, to represent her as the Disconsolate Widow of *Hector*, and to suppose her the Mother only of *Astyanax*. Considered in this Light, no doubt, she moves our Compassion much more effectually, than she could be imagined to do in any Distress for a Son by a Second Husband.

In Order to bring about this beautiful Incident, so necessary to heighten in *Andromache* the Character of a tender Mother, an Affectionate Wife, and a Widow full of Veneration for the Memory of her deceased Husband; the Life of *Astyanax* is indeed a little prolonged beyond the Term fixed to it by the general Consent of the Ancient Authors. But so long as there is nothing improbable in the Supposition, a judicious Critick will allways be pleased, when he finds a Matter of Fact (especially so far removed into the dark and fabulous Ages) falsified, for the Embellishment of a whole Poem.

Now I shall try to show, how Philips has altered the play in order to adapt it to his English audience. Racine's *Andromaque* is written in Alexandrines, the heroic verse of 6 jambic feet. Of Racine's Alexandrines Bernardin<sup>1)</sup> says: "*Nul n'a connu comme Racine tous les secrets de l'alexandrin, . . . dans ses tragédies elles-mêmes le grand vers a perdu sa monotonie, tellement le poète a l'art de le couper et de le briser de la façon la plus naturelle et la plus conforme au sentiment quil' exprime*".

Philips' "*Distrest Mother*" is, as well as his other two tragedies, written in blankverse, the English verse of 5 jambic feet, with no end-rhyme. Since Christopher Marlowe's time blankverse had been in general use. Philips closes all five acts of his *Distrest Mother* with added verses of his own with end-rhyme, they are mostly written in very fine language and have a higher pathos, (they will be quoted afterwards) These are the only passages, where Philips uses the end-rhyme which we find all through Racine's work. At the end of Act 1, 4 and 5 Philips has added new scenes. In all his pieces Philips employs end-rhyme only at the close of each act. The

<sup>1)</sup> Bernardin, *Théâtre Complet* . . . T. I p. XXVI et XXVII.

same I found in Nathaniel Lee's *Mithridates*, as I stated on page 21, and in *Jane Shore* by Nicholas Rowe, and also often in Shakespeare.

### Act I.

The first acts of the two plays differ very little, Racine's first act has four scenes, in the last one Pyrrhus has a conversation with Andromaque. He finishes his vain protestation of love with telling her, that the will kill her son. Andromaque answers him:

Racine I, 4. "Hélas! il mourra donc: il n'a pour sa défense  
Que les pleurs de sa mère, et que son innocence.  
Et peut-être après tout, en l'état où je suis,  
Sa mort avancera la fin de mes ennuis.  
Je prolongeais pour lui ma vie et ma misère;  
Mais enfin sur ses pas j'irai revoir son père.  
Ainsi tous trois, Seigneur, par vos soins réunis,  
Nous vous . . ."

Here Pyrrhus interrupts her with the words:

"Allez, Madame, allez voir votre fils.  
Peut-être, en le voyant, votre amour plus timide  
Ne prendra pas toujours sa colère pour guide.  
Pour savoir nos destins j'irai vous retrouver.  
Madame, en l'embrassant, songez à le sauver".

The question is now: will Andromaque sacrifice her son to Hector's memory, or will she give up her love to Hector on behalf of her son? The first act is a fine exposition, it closes at the point, where Andromaque has to decide: if she declines to marry Pyrrhus, Astyanax is lost, on the other hand Pyrrhus promises her to defend Astyanax from the Greeks and from the whole world, if she becomes his wife. Racine here gives the last word to Pyrrhus and the spectator does not yet know certainly, how Andromaque will decide. Philips makes here an alteration, his fourth scene ends as Racine's with Pyrrhus' advice to Andromache:

Philips I, 4. "Go, Madam; visit this unhappy Son.

The Sight of him may band your stubborn Heart;  
And turn to Softness your unjust Disdain.  
I shall once more expect your Answer. Go;  
And think, while you embrace the Captive Boy,  
Think, that his Life depends on your Resolves".

Then he adds a 5<sup>th</sup> scene, the persons are Andromache and Cephisa; in fact it is, as all these long conversations between the four chief characters and their confidants, only a monologue, in which Andromache expresses her distress and her desire to die with her son Astyanax. Racine makes his Andromaque express the same

thoughts to Pyrrhus in the 4<sup>th</sup> scene; as we see, when we compare the above (p. 34) quoted verses from Racine: "Hélas, il mourra donc . . . to the following:

Andromache:

Philips I, 5. "I'll go; and, in the Anguish of my Heart  
Weep o'er my Child — If we must dye, my Life  
Is wrapt in his; I shall not long survive.  
'Tis for his sake, that I have suffer'd Life;  
Groan'd in Captivity; and out-lived Hector.  
Yes, my Astyanax; we'll go together!  
Together to the Realms of Night we'll go!  
There to thy ravish'd Eyes thy Sire I'll show,  
And point him out among the Shades below".

Philips' scene V for which there is no necessity, could be explained with his special predilection for numerous short scenes, which he shows in his other dramas. In this play Philips adds 3 short scenes, which contain each a monologue: one in Act I, one in Act IV and one in Act V. I think, Philips' chief reason for doing this, is to break the monotony of the French play with its long dialogues; from this point of view Philips was successful.

## Act II.

The second act ends with a long scene in which Pyrrhus shows Phoenix, how he struggles to subdue his love for Andromaque. He decides to go and see Hermione. Racine's Pyrrhus closes with the words:

Racine II, 5. "Faisons tout ce que j'ai promis".

Philips' Pyrrhus ends the conversation with a fine philosophical conversation about his present state of mind.

Philips II, 5. "Oh, 'tis a heavy Task to conquer Love!  
And wean the Soul from her accustom'd Fondness.  
But, come: — A long Farewell to Hector's Widow.  
'Tis with a secret Pleasure I look back,  
And see the many Dangers I have pass'd.  
The Merchant thus, in dreadful Tempests tost,  
Thrown by the Waves on some unlook'd-for Coast;  
Oft turns, and sees, with a delighted Eye,  
'Midst Rocks and Shelves the broken Billows fly.  
And, while the outrageous Winds the Deep deform,  
Smiles on the Tumult, and enjoys the Storm."

## Act III.

Philips has altered the end of the third act almost in the same way as the end of the second. Racine's Andromaque says to

Céphisa after a long conversation that is also mostly a monologue of the heroine:

Rac. III, 8. "Allons sur son tombeau consulter mon époux."

Philips' Andromache says:

Phil. III, 8. "Come my Cephisa, let us go together,  
To the sad Monument, which I have rais'd  
To Hector's Shade; where in their sacred Urn  
The Ashes of my Hero ly enclosed,  
The dear Remains, which I have sav'd from Troy;  
There let me weep, there summon to my Aid,  
With pious Rites, my Hector's awful Shade;  
Let him be Witness to my Doubts, my Fears,  
My agonizing Heart, my flowing Tears:  
Oh! may he rise in Pity from his Tomb,  
And fix his wretched Son's uncertain Doom".

#### Act IV.

Racine concludes his fourth act with scene 6, in which Phoenix warns Pyrrhus of Hermione's rage. The latter tells him to take good care of Astyanax, while he goes to meet Andromaque, saying:

Rac. IV, 6. "Andromaque m'attend. Phoenix, garde son fils."

Philips' Pyrrhus says the same:

Phil. IV, 6. "I must prepare to meet Andromache.  
Do thou place all my Guards about her Son  
If he be safe, Pyrrhus is free from Fear".

Philips adds besides a 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> scene to his fourth act. The 7<sup>th</sup> is a monologue of Phoenix, in which he meditates over his mother's noble character and his rash actions and the result of them. In Racine's play Andromaque leaves the scene in the fourth act at the end of the first scene after having explained her last will to Cephisa and having recommended her son to her charge. In Philips' 8<sup>th</sup> scene of the fourth act she appears again and in a long dialogue confides her son to Cephisa and tells her that she is willing to die.

It must be observed that Philips here in two long scenes, the first and the last of the fourth act, gives nothing more than Racine in the first scene. While Racine spares his words and does not write one superfluous verse, Philips employs here more than twice as many words to express the same. Philips closes this act as his others with rhymed verse.

Andromache says:

Phil. IV, 8. "Hector, I come, once more a Queen, to join thee!  
Thus the gay Victim, with fresh Garlands crown'd,  
Pleased with the sacred Fife's enlivening Sound,  
Through gazing Clouds, in solemn State, proceeds;  
And, drest in fatal Pomp, magnificently bleeds".

Act V.

In Racine's *Andromaque* the acting persons of the third scene of the fifth act are Oreste, Hermione and Cléone. Oreste has killed Pyrrhus to please Hermione, but now she chides him for having done so. Originally there were Oreste, *Andromaque*, Hermione, Cléone, Céphisa and soldiers of Oreste on the stage, as we find in the editions before 1673. Then Racine changed this scene and omitted the parts of *Andromaque* and her confidant. I think, Racine was right, for in reality only Hermione and Oreste can be of interest in this scene; *Andromaque* is in an awkward position, while Hermione rages, and the spectator, touched by Hermione's passionate grief is not much interested in all that the mother of Astyanax will have to say here. Philips shows good taste in giving this scene, as Racine gave it in the editions after 1673, having omitted *Andromaque's* appearance.

At the end of the fifth act Philips adds three scenes, No. 6, 7 and 8. Racine's piece ends with the hallucinations of Oreste, decidedly the most unhappy person in the tragedy. Philips' added 6<sup>th</sup> scene contains Phoenix's complaints about his master's death. In the 7<sup>th</sup> scene *Andromache* appears again with Cephisa to join in his complaints and to praise Pyrrhus' bravery and valour; she calls him the bravest man in the Greek league and swears vengeance, exclaiming:

Phil. V, 7. "Yes, ye inhumane Greeks! The Time will come,  
When you shall dearly pay your bloody Deeds!"

She says to Cephisa:

ibid. "Oh, never! never — While I live, my Tears  
Will never cease; for I was born to Grieve". —

Then *Andromache* commands to Phoenix to prepare a costly funeral:

ibid. "Give present Orders for the Funeral Poms:  
Let him be robed in all his Regal State;  
Place round him every shining Mark of Honour;  
And let the Pile, that consecrates his Ashes,  
Rise like his Fame, and blaze above the Clouds".

In the next scene, directly afterwards, *Andromache*, who said that her "tears will never cease, for she was born to grieve", meets her son and expresses her transports by the following words:

Phil. V, 8. "With open arms I'll meet him! — Oh Cephisa!  
A springing Joy, mixt with a soft Concern,  
A Pleasure, which no Language can express,  
An Ecstasie, that Mothers only feel,  
Plays round my Heart, and brightens up my Sorrow,

Like Gleams of Sun-shine in a louring Skie.  
Though plunged in Ills, and exercised in Care,  
Yet never let the noble Mind despair.  
When prest by Dangers, and beset with Foes,  
The Gods their timely Succour interpose;  
And, when our Virtue sinks, o'er-whelm'd with Grief,  
By unforeseen Expedients bring Relief."

I think, this conclusion of Philips' tragedy is the weakest part of his alterations of the piece. Certainly Andromache after Pyrrhus' assassination is in a difficult position on the stage; Racine is perfectly justified in not showing her again to his audience, while in Philips' play she acts here as a person who is always master of the situation, a perfect society lady who finds "den rechten Ton in allen Lebenslagen". Andromache can only win our hearts by showing real human feelings. I think, Philips has by these last scenes greatly spoilt this pure womanly character. Especially the dry moral, pronounced by Andromache at the end cannot affect the audience after so much true passion. Philips follows therein the fashion of his times, when most English plays concluded with such moralizing, sometimes not at all in the right place, for instance in *Jane Shore* by N. Rowe.

In Bernardin's edition of Racine's works, I found in the appendix, p. 384 to 386 these last scenes of the fifth act, added by Philips, very well turned into French. They are translated by l'Abbé du Bos and taken from his "Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et sur la peinture". All my efforts to get this book, have been unavailing. I should have liked very much to read his opinion of this last addition of Philips to Racine's work.

I hope, I have succeeded in showing that Philips' alterations of Racine's play are not altogether worthless. Philips did not depreciate the tragedy, but accomodated it to English taste and to the stage of his times.

The first representation of the "Distrest Mother" closed with the following epilogue which contributed much to the great success of the play, it was spoken by Mrs. Oldfield:

"I hope you'll own, that with becoming Art  
I've play'd my Game, and topp'd the Widow's Part.  
My Spouse, poor Man! could not live out the Play,  
But dy'd commodiously on Wedding—Day:  
While I, his Relict, made at one bold Fling  
Myself a Princess, and young Sty a King.  
You Ladies, who protract a Lover's Pain,  
And hear your Servants sigh whole Years in vain;  
Which of you all would not on Marriage venture,

Might she so soon upon her Jointure enter?  
 'Twas a strange Scape! had Pyrrhus liv'd till now  
 I had been finely hamper'd in my Vow.  
 To dye by one's own Hand, and fly the Charms  
 Of Love and Life in a young Monarch's Arms!  
 'Twere an hard Fate—ere I had undergone it  
 I might have took one Night — to think upon it.  
 But why, you'll say, was all this Grief exprest  
 For a first Husband, laid long since at Rest?  
 Why so much Coldness to my kind Protector?  
 — Ah Ladies! had you known the good Man Hector!  
 Homer will tell you (or I'm miss-inform'd)  
 That, when enrag'd the Grecian Camp he storm'd,  
 To break the ten-fold Barriers of the Gate  
 He threw a Stone of such prodigious Weight,  
 As no two Men could lift; not even of those,  
 Who in that Age of thund'ring Mortals rose:  
 — It would have sprain'd a Dozen modern Beaux.  
 At length, howe'er I laid my Weeds aside,  
 And sunk the Widow in the well-dress'd Bride.  
 In you it still remains to grace the Play,  
 And bless with Joy my Coronation-Day:  
 Take then, ye Circles of the Brave and Fair,  
 The Fatherless and Widow to your Care”

This Epilogue must be attributed to Addison, in different authors I found it simply stated as Addison's; in truth it was written by Eustace Budgell and entirely altered by Addison. I shall quote some authentic statements about it:

Dr. Johnson<sup>1)</sup> says about the author of this epilogue:

“Of this distinguished Epilogue the reputed author was the wretched Budgell, whom Addison used to denominate ‘the man who calls me cousin’; and when he was asked how such a silly fellow could write so well, replied, ‘The Epilogue was another thing, when I saw it first’. It was known in Tonson's family, and told to Garrick, that Addison was himself the author of it, and that, when it had been at first printed with his name, he came early in the morning, before the copies were distributed, and ordered it to be given to Budgell, that it might add weight to the solicitation which he was then making for a place”.

Beljame<sup>2)</sup> states: “Addison remania complètement, ou même écrivit en entier l'épilogue de la tragédie d'Ambrose Philips ‘the

<sup>1)</sup> Johnson vol. III p. 261/62.

<sup>2)</sup> A. Beljame p. 297 n. 5.

Distrest Mother<sup>2</sup>, l'épilogue fut très applaudi et Addison le fit passer comme étant de Budgell seul<sup>3</sup>.

J. Warton<sup>1</sup>) relates:

"I have heard Mr. Garrick say that Addison wrote the celebrated epilogue published in the name of Budgell; that this was a fact he received from some of the Tonsons".

I read in Cibber's Lives<sup>2</sup>) about this matter:

"It was now that Mr. Budgell commenced author, and was partly concerned with Sir Richard Steele and Mr. Addison in writing the Tatler . . . The speculations of our author were generally liked, and Mr. Addison was frequently complimented upon the ingenuity of his kinsman. About the same time he wrote an epilogue to the Distress'd Mother ('till then it was usual to discontinue an epilogue after the sixth night. But this was called for by the audience, and continued for the whole run of this play: Budgell did not scruple to sit in the pit, and call for it himself). which had a greater run than anything of that kind ever had before, and has had this peculiar regard shewn to it since, that now, above thirty years afterwards, it is generally spoke at the representation of that play".

After having read this famous epilogue we are much surprised at its great success. It is not at all written in accordance with our present taste; but Addison and Budgell try to please the perverse taste of their times. Genest<sup>3</sup>) says:

"The Epilogue, supposed to be written by Addison, was wonderfully successful — tho' it does not appear to have any extraordinary merit, and completely turns the distress of Andromache into ridicule".

In my opinion Felix Lindner<sup>4</sup>) gives a good definition of the epilogues of those times, he says:

„Das Publikum verlangte sie, und der Dichter mußte sich dieser Forderung anbequemen. Es hatte sich in der Restaurationszeit an sie gewöhnt und ihnen besonderen Geschmack abgewonnen, weil die größten Obscönitäten gerade an diesen Stellen ausgesprochen wurden . . . An und für sich war die Beigabe von Prologen und Epilogen nicht zu tadeln. Sie sollten den Zuschauer in den Hauptinhalt des Stückes einführen, bezw. ihm die wichtigsten Punkte nochmals vor Augen führen. Mit der Zeit aber waren sie zu reinen Zerrbildern entartet“.

Warton<sup>5</sup>) says about this kind of epilogues:

"The Epilogue to Jane Shore\*) is the last piece that belongs to this section. It is written with that air of gallantry and raillery, which, by a strange perversion of taste, the audience expects in all

<sup>1</sup>) J. Warton, Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope vol. II p. 240.

<sup>2</sup>) Cibber's Lives vol. V p. 3.

<sup>3</sup>) Genest . . . vol. II p. 496.

<sup>4</sup>) Felix Lindner, Henry Fieldings dramatische Werke S. 137.

<sup>5</sup>) J. Warton, Essay on Pope p. 278.



epilogues to the most serious and pathetic pieces. To recommend cuckoldom and palliate adultery, is their usual intent . . . In this taste Garrick has written some, that abound in spirit and drollery”.

\*) Jane Shore by Nic. Rowe, acted 1714; the Epilogue was written by Pope.

The first lines of the Epilogue to Philips’ *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester* give also a good definition of the purpose of those epilogues:

“The Business of an Epilogue, they say,  
Is, to destroy the Moral of the Play:  
To wipe the Tears of Vertue from your Eyes;  
And make you Merry, — lest you should grow Wise”.

As we saw before, the success of this epilogue was indeed marvellous; in the *Spectator* I found two letters discussing this epilogue, they have certainly helped a good deal to make it so popular.

Dr. Johnson says about it<sup>1)</sup>:

“It was concluded with the most successful Epilogue \*) that was ever yet spoken on the English theatre. The three first nights it was recited twice; and not only continued to be demanded through the run, as it is termed, of the play, but whenever it is recalled to the stage, where by peculiar fortune, though a copy from the French, it yet keeps its place, the Epilogue is still expected, and is still spoken.

The propriety of Epilogues in general, and consequently of this, was questioned by a correspondent of “*The Spectator*”, whose letter was undoubtedly admitted for the sake of the answer, which soon followed, written with much zeal and acrimony. The attack and the defence equally contributed to stimulate curiosity and continue attention”.

\*) The Epilogue to “*The Distressed Mother*” was spoke no less than nine times by Mrs. Oldfield the three first nights “*The Distressed Mother*” was acted, and is still constantly called for by the audience whenever that play is represented on the stage.

We find the first letter about the Epilogue in the *Spectator* Nr. 338, of Friday, March 28, 1712; it runs thus:

“I find the tragedy of the *Distrest Mother* is published to day: The author of the prologue, I suppose, pleads an old excuse I have read somewhere of being dull with design; and the gentleman who writ the epilogue has, to my knowledge, so much of greater moment to value himself upon, that he will easily forgive me for publishing the exceptions made against gaiety at the end of serious entertainments, in the following letter: I should be more unwilling to pardon

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<sup>1)</sup> Johnson vol. III p. 261.

him, than anybody, a practice which cannot have any ill consequence, but from the abilities of the person who is guilty of it".

"Mr. Spectator,

I had the happiness the other night of sitting very near you and your worthy friend Sir Roger, at the acting of the new tragedy, which you have in a late paper or two so justly recommended. I was highly pleased with the advantageous situation fortune had given me in placing me so near two gentlemen, from one of which I was sure to hear such reflections on the several incidents of the play, as pure nature suggested, and from the other such as flowed from the exactest art and judgment: Though I must confess that my curiosity led me so much to observe the knight's reflections, that I was not so well at leisure to improve myself by yours. Nature, I found, played her part in the knight pretty well, till at the last concluding lines she intirely forsook him. You must know, Sir, that it is always my custom, when I have been well entertained at a new tragedy, to make my retreat before the facetious epilogue enters; not but that those pieces are often very well writ, but having paid down my half-crown, and made a fair purchase of as much of the pleasing melancholy as the poets art can afford me, or my own nature admit of, I am willing to carry some of it home with me; and cannot endure to be at once tricked out of all, though by the wittiest dexterity in the world. However I kept my seat the other night, in hopes of finding my own sentiments of this matter favoured by your friend's; when, to my great surprise, I found the Knight entering with equal pleasure into both parts, and as much satisfied with Mrs. Oldfield's gaiety, as he had been before with Andromache's greatness. Whether this were no more than an affect of the knight's peculiar humanity, pleased to find at last, that after all the tragical doings every thing was safe and well, I do not know. But, for my own part, I must confess I was so dissatisfied, that I was sorry the poet had saved Andromache, and could heartily have wished that he had left her stone-dead upon the stage. For you cannot imagine, Mr. Spectator, the mischief she was reserved to do me. I found my soul, during the action, gradually worked up to the highest pitch; and felt the escalated passion, which all generous minds conceive at the sight of virtue in dress. The impression, believe me, Sir, was so strong upon me, that I am persuaded if I had been let alone in it, I could at an extremity have ventured to defend yourself and Sir Roger against half a score of the fiercest Mohocks: But the ludicrous epilogue, in the close extinguished all my ardour, and made me look upon all such noble achievements as downright silly and romantic. What the rest of the audience felt, I cannot so well tell: For myself I must declare, that at the end of the play I found my

soul uniform, and all of a piece; but at the end of the epilogue, it was so jumbled together and divided between jest and earnest, that if you will forgive me an extravagant fancy, I will here set it down. I could not but fancy, if my soul had at then quitted my body, and descended to the poetical shades in the posture it was then in, what a strange figure it would have made among them. They would not have known what to have made of my motley spectre, half comick and half tragick, all over resembling a ridiculous face, that at the same time laughs on one side and cries on the other. The only defence, I think, I have ever heard made for this, as it seems to me the most unnatural track of the comic tail to the tragic head, is this, that the minds of the audience must be refreshed, and gentlemen and ladies not sent away to their own homes with too dismal and melancholy thoughts about them: For who knows the consequence of this? We are much obliged indeed to the poets for the great tenderness they express for the safety of our persons, and heartily thank them for it. But if that be all, pray, good Sir, assure them, that we are none of us like to come to any great harm; and that, let them do their best, we shall in all probability live out the length of our days, and frequent the theatres more than ever . . . Pray, Sir, do what you can to put a stop to these growing evils, and you will very much oblige

Your humble servant Physibulus”.

The following answer appeared soon afterwards in No 341 of Tuesday, April I, 1712:

“Having, to oblige my correspondent Physibulus, printed his letter last Friday, in relation to the new epilogue, he cannot take it amiss, if I now publish another, which I have just received from a gentleman who does not agree with him in his sentiments upon that matter”.

“Sir,

I am amazed to find an epilogue attached in your last Friday's paper, which has been so generally applauded by the town, and received such honours as were never before given to any in an English theatre.

The audience would not permit Mrs. Oldfield to go off the stage the first night, till she had repeated it twice: The second night the noise of Encores was as loud as before, and she was again obliged to speak it twice; the third night it was called for a second time; and in short, contrary to all other epilogues, which are dropt after the third representation of the play, this has already been repeated nine times.

I must own I am the more surprised to find this censure in opposition to the whole town, in a paper which has hitherto been famous for the candour of its criticisms.

I can by no means allow your melancholy correspondent, that the new epilogue is unnatural, because it is gay. If I had a mind to be learned, I could tell him that the prologue and epilogue were real parts of the ancient tragedy; but every one knows that on the British stage they are distinct performances by themselves, pieces intirely detached from the play, and no way essential to it.

The moment the play ends, Mrs. Oldfield is no more Andromache, but Mrs. Oldfield; and though the poet had left Adromache stone-dead upon the stage, as your ingenious correspondent phrases it, Mrs. Oldfield might still have spoke a merry epilogue. We have an instance of this in a tragedy where is not only a death but a martyrdom. St Catherine was there personated by Nell Gwyn; she lies stone-dead upon the stage, but upon those gentlemens offering to remove her body, whose business it is to carry off the slain in our English tragedies, she breaks out into that abrupt beginning of what was a very ludicrous, but at the same time thought a very good epilogue:

"Hold, are you mad? you damn'd confounded dog,

I am to rise and speak the epilogue".

"This diverting manner was always practised by Mr. Dryden, who, if he was not the best writer of tragedies in his time, was allowed by every one to have the happiest turn for a prologue or an epilogue. The epilogues to Cleomenes, Don Sebastian, The Duke of Guise, Aurengzebe, and Love Triumphant, are all precedents of this nature.

I might further justify this practice by that excellent epilogue which was spoken a few years since, after the tragedy of Phaedra and Hippolitus; with a great many others, in which the authors have endeavoured to make the audience merry. If they have not all succeeded so well as the writer of this, they have however shown that it was not for want of good-will.

I must further observe that the gaiety of it may be still the more proper, as it is at the end of a French play: Since every one knows that nation, who are generally esteemed to have as polite a taste as any in Europe, always close their tragic entertainments with what they call a *Petit Piece*, which is purposely designed to raise mirth, and send away the audience well-pleased. The same person, who has supported the chief character in the tragedy, very often plays the principal part in the *Petit Piece* . . .

As the new epilogue is written conformable to the practice of our best poets, so it is not such an one, which, as the Duke of Buckingham says in his *Rehearsal* might serve for any other play; but wholly rises out of the occurrences of the piece it was composed for.

The only reason your mournful correspondent gives against this Facetious Epilogue, as he calls it, is that he has a mind to go home "melancholy". I wish the gentleman may not be more grave than wise. For my own part, I must confess, I think it very sufficient to have the anguish of a fictitious piece remain upon me while it is representing, but I love to be sent home to bed in a good humour. If Physibulus is however resolved to be inconsolable, and not have his tears dried up, he need only continue his old custom, and when he has his half crown's worth of sorrow, flink out before the epilogue begins.

It is pleasant enough to hear this tragical genius complaining of the great mischief Andromache has done him: What was that? Why, she made him laugh . . . He tells us soon after, though a small mistake of sorrow for rage, that during the whole action he was so very sorry, that he thinks he could have attacked half a score of the fiercest Mohocks in the excess of his grief. I cannot but look upon it as an happy accident, that a man who is so bloody-minded in his affliction, was diverted from this fit of outrageous melancholy. I shall readily grant him that his soul, as he himself says, would have made a very ridiculous figure, had it quitted the body, and descended to the poetical shades, in such an encounter.

As to his conceit of tacking a tragick head with a comic tail, in order to refresh the audience, it is such a piece of jargon, that I do not know what to make of it . . .

I am, Sir, with great respect,

Your most obedient, most humble servant "Philomeides".

Only No. 341 is signed X (Budgell); According to Drake<sup>1)</sup> No. 338 and 341 are both written by Budgell but Dr. Johnson told Boswell,<sup>2)</sup> that Addison wrote Budgell's papers in the Spectator, "at least mended them so much that he made them almost his own".

Besides the prologue and the epilogue and the two papers concerning it in the "Spectator" Philips' friends did all they could for the success of this tragedy. Dr. Johnson<sup>3)</sup> speaks of their efforts:

"In 1712 he brought upon the stage 'The Distressed Mother', almost a translation of Racines 'Andromaque'. Such a work requires no uncommon powers, but the friends of Philips exerted every art to promote his interest. Before the appearance of the play, a whole 'Spectator', none indeed of the best, was devoted to its praise; while it yet continued to be acted, another 'Spectator' was written, to tell what impression it made upon Sir Roger and on the first night a select audience, says Pope, was called together to applaud it".

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<sup>1)</sup> Drake, Miscellanies p. 267.

<sup>2)</sup> Boswell by Croker, ed. 1847, p. 509.

<sup>3)</sup> Johnson, L. of the P. III p. 260.

The "Spectator" written about the "Distrest Mother" before the representation is No. 290, of Friday, February 1, 1912, it runs thus:

"The players, who know I am very much their friend, take all opportunities to express a gratitude to me for being so. They could not have a better occasion for obliging me, than one which they lately took hold of. They desired my friend Will Honeycomb to bring me to the reading of a new tragedy; it is called the Distressed Mother. I must confess, though some days are passed since I enjoyed that entertainment, the passions of the several characters dwell strongly upon my imagination; and I congratulate the age, that they are at last to see truth and human life represented in the incidents which concern heroes and heroines. The stile of the play is such as becomes those of the first education, and the sentiments worthy those of the highest figure. It was a most exquisite pleasure to me, to observe real tears drop from the eyes of those who had long made it their profession to dissemble affliction; and the player, who read, frequently throw down the book, until he had given vent to the humanity which rose in him at some irresistible touches of the imagined sorrow. We have seldom had any female distress on the stage, which did not, upon cool examination appear to flow from the weakness rather than the misfortune of the person represented: But in this tragedy you are not entertained with the ungoverned passions of such as are enamoured of each other merely as they are men and women, but their regards are founded upon high conceptions of each other's virtue and merit; and the character which gives name to the play, is one who has behaved herself with heroic virtue in the most important circumstances of a female life, those of a wife, a widow, and a mother. If there be those whose minds have been too attentive upon the affairs of life, to have any notion of the passion of love in such extremes as are known only to particular tempers, yet in the above-mentioned considerations, the sorrow of the heroine will move even the generality of mankind. Domestic virtues concern all the world, and there is no one living who is not interested that Andromache should be an imitable character. The generous affection to the memory of her deceased husband, that tender care for her son, which is even heightened with the consideration of his father, and these regards preserved in spite of being tempted with the possession of the highest greatness, are what cannot but be venerable even to such an audience as at present frequents the English theatre. My friend Will Honeycomb commended several tender things that were said, and told me they were very genteel; but whispered me, that he feared the piece was not busy enough for the present taste. To supply this, he recommended to the players to be very careful in their scenes, and above all things,

that every part should be perfectly new dressed. I was very glad to find, that they did not neglect my friend's admonition, because there are a great many in his class of criticism who may be gained by it; but indeed the truth is, that as to the work itself, it is every where nature. The persons are of the highest quality in life, even that of Princes; but their quality is not represented by the poet, with direction that guards and waiters should follow them in every scene, but their grandeur appears in greatness of sentiments, flowing from minds worthy their condition. To make a character truly great, this author understands that it should have its foundation in superior thoughts and maxims of conduct. It is very certain, that many an honest woman would make no difficulty, though she had been the wife of Hector, for the sake of a kingdom, to marry the enemy of her husband's family and country; and indeed who can deny but she might be still an honest woman, but no heroine? That may be defensible nay laudable in one character, which would be in the highest degree exceptionable in another . . . What is further very extraordinary in this work is, that the persons are all of them laudable, and their misfortunes arise rather from unguarded virtue than propensity to vice. The town has an opportunity of doing itself justice in supporting the representations of passion, sorrow, indignation, even despair itself, within the rules of decency, honour and good-breeding; and since there is no one can flatter himself his life will be always fortunate, they may here see sorrow as they would wish to bear it whenever it arrives.

Mr. Spectator,

I am appointed to act a part in the new tragedy called the Distressed Mother: It is the celebrated grief of Orestes which I am to personate; but I shall not act it as I ought, for I shall feel it too intimately to be able to utter it. I was last night repeating a paragraph to myself which I took to be an expression of rage, and in the middle of the sentence there was a stroke of self-pity which quite unmanned me. Be pleased, Sir, to print this letter, that when I am oppressed in this manner, at such an interval, a certain part of the audience may not think I am out; and I hope with this allowance to do it at satisfaction.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble servant

George Powell" . . .

This No. is signed T.; some authors say it is written by Addison, according to Courthope<sup>1)</sup> and Drake<sup>2)</sup> it is by Steele. When

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<sup>1)</sup> Courthope's History of Engl. Poetry p. 430.

<sup>2)</sup> Drake, Miscellanies.

the "Distrest Mother" had been played night after night since the 17<sup>th</sup> March, it was thus praised in No. 335 of March 25, 1712:

"Those are the likest copies, which are drawn

From the original of human life. Roscommon.

My friend Sir Roger de Coverley, when we last met together at the club, told me that he had a great mind to see the new tragedy with me, assuring me at the same time, that he had not been at a play these twenty years . . . He then proceeded to inquire of me who this Distressed Mother was; and upon hearing that she was Hector's widow, he told me that her husband was a brave man, and that when he was a school-boy he had read his life at the end of the dictionary. My friend asked me, in the next place, if there would not be some danger in coming home late, in case the Mohocks should be abroad . . . We conveyed him in safety to the play-house, where after having marched up the entry in good order, the Captain and I went in with him, and seated him betwixt us in the pit . . . Upon the entering of Pyrrhus, the Knight told me that he did not believe the King of France himself had a better strut. I was indeed very attentive to my old friend's remarks, because I looked upon them as a piece of natural criticism, and was well pleased to hear him, at the conclusion of almost every scene, telling me that he could not imagine how the play would end. One while he appeared much concerned for Andromache; and a little while after as much for Hermione; and was extremely puzzled to think what would become of Pyrrhus. When Sir Roger saw Andromache's obstinate refusal to her lover's importunities, he whispered me in the ear, that he was sure she would never have him; to which he added, with a more than ordinary vehemence, you cannot imagine, Sir, what it is to have to do with a widow. Upon Pyrrhus his threatening afterwards to leave her, the Knight shook his head and muttered to himself, Ay, do if you can. This part dwelt so much upon my friend's imagination, that at the close of the third act, as I was thinking of something else, he whispered me in the ear, These widows, Sir, are the most perverse creatures in the world. But pray, says he, you, that are a critick, is the play according to your dramatic rules, as you call them? Should your people in tragedy always talk to be understood? Why, there is not a single sentence in this play that I do not know the meaning of.

The fourth act very luckily began before I had time to give the old gentleman an answer: Well, says the Knight, sitting down with great satisfaction, I suppose we are now to see Hector's ghost. He then renewed his attention, and, from time to time fell a praising the widow. He made, indeed, a little mistake as to one of her pages, whom at his first entering he took for Astyanax; but quickly



set himself right in that particular, though, at the same time, he owned he should have been very glad to have seen the little boy, who, says he, must needs be a very fine child by the account that is given of him. Upon Hermione's going off with a menace to Pyrrhus, the audience gave a loud clap, to which Sir Roger added, On my word, a notable young baggage!

As there was a very remarkable silence and stillness in the audience during the whole action, it was natural for them to take the opportunity of these intervals between the acts, to express their opinion of the players, and of their respective parts. Sir Roger hearing a cluster of them praise Orestes, struck in with them, and told them, that he thought his friend Pylades was a very sensible man; as they were afterwards applauding Pyrrhus, Sir Roger put in a second time: And let me tell you, says he, though he speaks but little, I like the old fellow in whiskers as well as any of them . . . The Knight was wonderfully attentive to the account which Orestes gives of Pyrrhus his death, and at the conclusion of it, told me it was such a bloody piece of work, that he was glad it was not done upon the stage. Seeing afterwards Orestes in his raving fit, he grew more than ordinary serious, and took occasion to moralize (in his way) upon an evil conscience, adding, that Orestes in his madness, looked as if he saw something . . . Sir Roger went out fully satisfied with his entertainment, and we guarded him to his lodging in the same manner that we brought him to the playhouse; being highly pleased, for my own part, not only with the performance of the excellent piece which had been presented, but with the satisfaction which it had given to the old man".

In the character of Sir Roger de Coverley Addison shows himself from the best side as the original and natural humorist, he is; I think, in humour Addison has not been excelled, except by Molière.

By all these means the attention of the public was still further fixed upon this drama. It is a matter of fact that Philips became chiefly by his "Distrest Mother" a recognized member of Addison's following and was enrolled among the wits of his times. Ward<sup>1)</sup> says about it:

"Although he published 3 tragedies, Philips is as a dramatist remembered by one of these only, or rather perhaps on account of the celebrity acquired by the Epilogue bestowed upon it by the master-spirit of the little literary senate in which Philips had enrolled himself.

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<sup>1)</sup> A. W. Ward, a History of Engl. Dramatic Literature to the Death of Queen Anne vol. III p. 425.

The characteristically sentimental title of the *Distrest Mother* (acted in 1711) was not intended to conceal the fact that this tragedy was a version of the *Andromaque* of Racine, but the efforts of Steele and Addison to buoy up its theatrical success have succeeded in securing to it a place among the remembered productions of our dramatic literature".

There were but few exceptions to the general praise of this tragedy, I only know of two: Samuel Richardson, the novelist, and Henry Fielding, the greatest parodist of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Mr. Bernardin says in his edition of the "*Théâtre Complet de Jean Racine*", in his notes to "*Andromaque*", page 282 and 283:

"Malgré l'incomparable talent de mistress Oldfield et de mistress Porter, le rigide Richardson jugea sévèrement la pièce, si sévèrement qu'il inclinait à ranger Racine parmi les écrivains qui" semblent avoir pour but de soulever ces orages du coeur dont la violence emporte tout, religion, raison, bonnes moeurs. "Ce singulier jugement ne mérite pas même une réfutation."

It is not surprising that Richardson, the moralist and opponent of all passion and violence in literature, did not approve of this "tragedy of passionate love", as we may call it.

It seems to me very interesting that the other adverse criticism came from Fielding, whom we all know as the dreadful enemy of Richardson whom he attacked with his parodical novels: *Joseph Andrews*, 1742, *Tom Jones*, 1749, and *Amelia*, 1751. Fielding's character was just the reverse of Richardson's; comparing Pope to Philips we find that they stand almost in the same relation to each other as Fielding to Richardson.

The *Distrest Mother* was thus criticized by Richardson, soon after the first representation in 1712. H. Fielding wrote a parody of the *Distrest Mother*, the "*Covent Garden Tragedy*" acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, June 1<sup>st</sup> 1732. I cannot imagine what induced Fielding to write and publish this parody against Philips just at this time. According to my list on page 60/61 the "*Distrest Mother*" was acted at Drury Lane in 1712, after that in 1722, and then not before 1735 in Covent Garden. Perhaps Fielding followed mostly the example of Pope and Swift given in the *Dunciad* four years before, in 1728.

Dobson<sup>1)</sup> says about this farce:

"... the *Covent Garden Tragedy*, 1732, a broad and rather riotous burlesque of Ambrose Philips' *Distrest Mother*; and the *Debauchees*; or, the *Jesuit Caught*, 1732 — ... Neither of the two last named pieces is worthy of the author and their strongest condem-

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<sup>1)</sup> Fielding by Austin Dobson, London 1889, p. 18/19.

nation in our day is that they were condemned in their own for their unbridled license, the Grub Street Journal going so far as to say that they had "met with the universal detestation of the Town".

I shall also give Lindner's<sup>1)</sup> judgment:

"A. Philips' Tragödie *The Distressed Mother*, eine steife Bearbeitung von Racines *Andromaque*, welche 1712 zuerst aufgeführt und mit unverdientem Lob überhäuft wurde, soll die äußere Veranlassung zu der *Covent-Garden Tragedy*, in welcher Fielding den steifen klassischen Personen der Tragödie die ausschweifendsten Leute niedrigsten Standes entgegensetzte, gewesen sein".

The contents of the burlesque are in short these: In a quarrel of the most vulgar kind Stormandra is so enraged that she engages Bilkum to kill Lovegirlo. — Soon afterwards Lovegirlo is said to be dead — Kissanda faints — Stormanda is supposed to have hanged herself — at the conclusion it appears that Lovegirlo is run through the coat and not through the body and that Stormanda had hung up her gown and not herself.

In the whole piece I cannot find any parallel with the "*Distrest Mother*", save that Philips tries to show the most sublime feelings and Fielding the most vulgar, or that Philips' play is solemn and somewhat slow and dull and Fielding's on the contrary very gay, lively and witty. It has only two acts and is like the *Distrest Mother* written in heroic verse; this contrast between contents and outward form produces of course a comic effect. It has eight acting persons, the same number as the "*Distrest Mother*". Genest<sup>2)</sup> says of them:

"The characters in this piece are too low for mock Tragedy, but still it must be allowed that Fielding has written it with a good deal of humour".

In my opinion Fielding satirizes Philips mostly in the different prolegomena and in the prologue to this farce.

In the prolegomena Fielding says that it is the fashion now to add to a work recommending verses, written by a friend — which are of notable use to an injudicious reader, and often lead him to the discovery of beauties which might otherwise have escaped his eye. This is certainly a hint at the prologue to the *Distrest Mother* by Steele. Instead of such verses Fielding introduces his piece with two burlesque critiques which show most of all Fielding's talent as a satirist; they copy well-known serious contemporary critiques. Here Fielding's intention is to ridicule Steele's and Addison's too favourable critiques of the *Distrest Mother* in the *Spectator*. Then he gives the following amusing definition of a tragedy:

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<sup>1)</sup> Felix Lindner, Henry Fielding's dramatische Werke p. 72.

<sup>2)</sup> Genest vol. III.

"A tragedy is a thing of five acts, written dialoguewise, consisting of several fine similes, metaphors and moral phrases, with here and there a speech upon liberty. It must contain an action, characters, sentiments, diction and a moral". Finally the Covent-Garden Tragedy is severely criticized in accordance with these rules and much censured by Fielding himself. All this reminds me of Pope's satirical paper in No. 40 of the "Guardian", where he criticizes his own and Philips' pastorals.

In the prologue the author declares that in tragedies mostly kings and heroes and their heroic actions, accompanied by blood and tears are shown to the public, but for this time he will entertain his audience with all the different people that live in Covent Garden. They were the most dissolute people of the lowest classes, and formed the greatest contrast to the classical persons of the Distrest Mother.

Theophilus Cibber, son of the poet Colley Cibber, spoke the above mentioned prologue and had a chief part in the play, that of Lovegirlo.

Frederick Laurence states in his "Life of Henry Fielding, London 1855, that the Covent-Garden Tragedy was rejected as immoral by the critiques, but nevertheless was frequently visited by the public and that young Harry Fielding had learnt to write immoral comedies for the amusement of immoral audiences. I have nowhere read that this burlesque was acted in later years; it by no means belongs to the best Fielding has written. We feel inclined to judge it more mildly, considering that in 1735 Fielding was only 28 years old; of course the plays of Fielding's youth do not equal the works of his later years.

## 2. The Briton.

Nine years elapsed before Philips again ventured on the stage, he then produced two tragedies, which possess much more originality than his first drama. Nevertheless they were not so well accepted and are now forgotten.

These two other tragedies, the Briton and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, are, as their titles state, derived from English history. Philips always showed strong national feeling and certainly intended to rouse patriotism in his fellow countrymen by presenting their national heroes to them. His predilection for national subjects Philips shows also in his collection of Old English Ballads and in his Pastorals.

While Philips' Distrest Mother and Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester are adaptations, the "Briton" is his original work, therefore it was very interesting to me to inquire minutely into the sources

of this tragedy. Philips goes back for his subject into the most distant past of English history. Philips, a good student of the Classics, as he shows by his translations, has certainly read Tacitus in the original, but his chief source for "the Briton" must have been Raphael Holinshed's *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, which appeared in 1577. Holinshed has gathered all the material of Tacitus, Hector Boëtius, Geoffrey of Monmouth, Dio Cassius and others; and lets all these historians speak in the mythical British history that Philips has used in the Briton.

There exist some other plays that are derived from the same part of British history and have their sources in Holinshed's chronicles. Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* and *King Lear* are drawn directly from Holinshed; in *Cymbeline* Shakespeare has besides used the novel of *Ginevra* in Boccaccio's *Decameron* II, 9. We have themes closely associated with Philips' Briton in Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* 1609, in *Boadicea* by Charles Hopkins 1697, Beaumont and Fletcher's *Bonduca*, a tragedy written about 1616 and the *Valiant Welshman* by R. A. (Gent.),<sup>1)</sup> about 1615. Later than Philips' "Briton" are published *Boadicea* by Richard Glover (1712—1785) and William Mason's *Caratacus*, 1777.

The "Valiant Welshman" and Mason's *Caratacus* are related to Philips' Briton in so far as their hero Caratacus is several times referred to in "the Briton" under the name of Caradoc.<sup>2)</sup>

Caratacus, Prince of the Silurians, is the national hero of the Welsh, as in German literature Hermann, Prince of the Cheruskans, is praised for having delivered his nation from de Roman yoke. For many years Caratacus has been the terror of the Romans. At last he was defeated and Cartismanda, Queen of the Brigants, acting as a traitor to him, delivered him up to the Romans.

As Caratacus is the hero of many legends, we find his name in all kinds of variations. In Holinshed I found Caratacus, Caratake and Caratac, in the Welsh *Mabinogi* we find the form Caradawe. The name Caratacus we find in four pieces: in Mason's work, in Anne Powell's *Caratacus*, in a "Metrical Sketch" by an unknown author and in a "Ballet of Action" by Mr. d'Edgville. The right form is the Latin Caratacus, the (c) in Caratacus is a mistake; there existed the old celtic word Caratācos which means amiable, "liebenswertig". In the "Valiant Welshman" and in "the Briton" he is called Caradoc.

According to Holinshed it was Ostorius Scapula who took Caratacus with him to Rome as a prisoner, and A. Didius was not

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<sup>1)</sup> A pseudonym.

<sup>2)</sup> see later on, p. 60—62 of my pamphlet.

sent to Britain till after Ostorius' death. In the Valiant Welshman and the Briton it is also Ostorius, while in Mason's Caractacus it is Aulus Didius, this is, no doubt, an anachronism. The two sons of Cartismandua: Vellinus and Elidurus, that figure in Mason's play, I found nowhere in Holinshed, and in "the Briton" is stated that Cartismand had no issue.

I cannot verify that Philips has known the "Valiant Welshman" and used this play as a source for his allusions to Caradoc in "the Briton", for, whenever Philips corresponds to the "Valiant Welshman". I found the same facts also stated in Holinshed. Mason's Caractacus is out of question as a source for Philips, being published fifty-five years later than "the Briton".

According to Genest<sup>1)</sup> "the Briton" was acted for the first time at Drury Lane on February 19<sup>th</sup> 1722 and was represented about eight times; the actors were very well known. Booth played Vanoc, Mills was Valens, the Roman Tribune, Wilks Yvor, Prince of the Silurians, while Cartismand was represented by Mrs Porter and Gwendolen by Mrs Booth.

Here I give a short summary of the tragedy: Vanoc, Prince of the Cornavians, has married as his second wife Cartismand, Queen of the Brigantians, rather from ambition than love.<sup>2)</sup> Cartismand is a woman of an imperious spirit, she proves a severe step-mother to Gwendolen, Vanoc's daughter by his first marriage, who is betrothed to Yvor, Prince of the Silurians. Cartismand has raised Vellocad, one of Vanoc's subjects to be her lover. Then a war has ensued between Vanoc and Cartismand; the latter being defeated in a battle, begs protection of the Romans.

#### Act I.

At the opening of the play Didius has just arrived in Britain to command the Roman legions. In a dialogue with Cartismand he promises to help her against Vanoc, the hero of the tragedy, who has also revolted against the Romans. Vanoc, "the Briton" and Valens have formerly been friends, Valens calls him:

"A wilful, hasty; — But, a gallant Briton!

Vanoc had promised his daughter Gwendolen to Valens — but after quarrelling with the Romans he has betrothed her to Yvor; Valens loves her still and when Yvor is supposed to march with his Silurians against Cartismand's army, he is content to fight his rival hoping to win Gwendolen by defeating him.

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<sup>1)</sup> Genest vol. III p. 69 and 70.

<sup>2)</sup> "the Briton I, i. Valens: . . . her did Vanoc, Prince of the Carnavians, wed — A Contract, More in Ambition founded, than in Love."

Act II.

Vanoc "the Briton" prays to Adraste to grant him victory, Alan, a messenger, appears to tell him that Yvor has gained the victory. Gwendolen comes to share her father's joys and Yvor returns from the battle-field. He has slain Vellocad, but Vanoc is not yet content, he will punish Cartismand still more and fight against the Romans. Gwendolen goes to thank Adraste for Yvor's victory, while Vanoc and Yvor decide to attack the Roman camp the very same day.

Act III.

Alan brings the message that Gwendolen on her return has been taken prisoner by the Romans, A party of the enemy has carried her off.

Alan reports to Yvor in Scene 2:

"Ebranc did all, that Man could do, to save her.

A Band of Romans, Part (it is suppos'd)

Of the main Body sent, too late, to succour

The Caledonian Troops; as back they came,

Skirting within the Wood, espied the Princess,

Then returning; and bore away their Prize.

The trusty Ebranc fell in her Defence.

A Soldier, scaping; has inform'd the King".<sup>1)</sup>

Gwendolen has been conducted to the tent of Valens, the tribune, who is himself in love with her. Of course Yvor and Vanoc are in great distress and thrown into the greatest confusion. While they prepare for her rescue, Valens is announced. He comes in the name of Didius, the Roman general, to offer peace, but Vanoc rejects indignantly all his offers of peace; he demands that Gwendolen and Cartismand should both be given up to him. This long interview is the finest scene in the whole tragedy. Cibber<sup>2)</sup> says about it:

"The scene between Vanoc and Valens is one of the most masterly to be met with in tragedy".

Dr. Johnson<sup>3)</sup> states:

"After nine years he produced (1722) 'The Briton', a tragedy which, whatever was its reception, is now neglected; though one of the scenes, between Vanoc the British Prince and Valens the Roman General, is confessed to be written with great dramatic skill, animated by spirit truly poetical".

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<sup>1)</sup> "King" must be meant for Vanoc, Prince of the Cornavians.

<sup>2)</sup> Cibber V, 135.

<sup>3)</sup> Johnson . . . III, 266.

Act IV.

Cartismand who knows that the Romans are negotiating with Vanoc and that no mercy will be shown her at the hands of her enraged husband, implores Didius not to give her up to him. Didius assures her that she will not have to complain of Roman faith. Valens comes back and Didius recommends Gwendolen, whose beauty he highly praises, to his care. In Scene IV Didius says:

"She shall be kindly entertain'd. To you  
I recommend that Care. Soften her Fears:  
Make her Confinement easy: Let her have  
Attendance, suiting to her Rank, — See Valens,  
Where she comes. — I leave you . . ."

Here follows a long scene between Valens and Gwendolen which reminds one much of a scene between Pyrrhus and Andromache in the *Distress Mother*.

Act V.

Cartismand desires Didius to commit Gwendolen to her custody, but Didius — partly on Valens' entreaty refuses to do so and takes her to his pavillon to save her from Cartismand. The captive princess is taken to his tent. Meanwhile Vanoc and Yvor have approached and taken the Roman camp by storm and made themselves masters of it. But Cartismand, in the violence of her rage, has entered Didius' tent and stabbed Gwendolen. When Yvor enters, he finds her dying and she expires in the arms of her betrothed; a highly dramatic scene. Then comes Vanoc and vows vengeance on Cartismand; the latter kills herself. Vanoc says:

V, II. O, thy Misery

Will I prolong; and vary it through Life! —

Cartism.: Hadst thou been more forgiving; —

I had been less cruel. —

Van.: Wickedness! Barbarian! Monster —

What had She done, alas? — Sweet Innocence! —

She would have interceded for thy Crimes.

Cartism.: Too well I knew the Purpose of thy Soul? —

Didst thou believe I would submit? — Resign my Crown? —

Or, that thou, only, hadst the Power to punish?

Van.: Yet, I will punish; meditate strange Torments! —

Then give thee to the Justice of the Gods.

Cart.: Thus, Vanoc, do I mock thy treasur'd Rage. —

My Heart springs forward, to the Dagger's Point.

Van.: Quick; — Wrest it from her! — Drag her hence to Chains.



Cart.: There needs no second stroke. —

Adieu, rash Man! — My Woes are at an End: —

Thine but begun; — and lasting as thy Life! —

All the chief persons of the play, except Gwendolen and Yvor, are historical and figure in Holinshed's *Chronicles of England* . . . vol. I. Vanoc, Prince of the Cornavians is in Holinshed called Venutius, ruler of the Jugants; in the "Valiant Welshman" it is Venusius, duke of Yorke, Cartismand's husband. I shall quote the passages of Holinshed which I have been able to trace in Philips' work<sup>1)</sup>:

" . . . But herewith began trouble to be raised in another part: for after that Caratac was taken, the chiefest and most skillful capteine which the Britains had, was one Venutius, a ruler of the people named Jugants, a man that remained a long time faithful to the Romans, and by their power was defended from his enimies, who had married with Cartimanda queene of the Brigants or Jorke-shire men. This Cartimanda (as ye haue heard) had deliuered Caratac into the Romans hands, thereby ministring matter for the emperour Claudius to triumph, by which pleasure shewed to the Romans, she increased thorough their friendship in power and wealth, whereof followed riotous lust to satisfie hir wanton appetite, so as she falling at square with her husband, married Vellocatus, one of his esquires, to whom she gaue hir kingdome, and so dishonoured hir selfe.

Heereupon insued cruell warre, in so much that in the end Venutius became enimie also to the Romans. But first they tugged together bewixt themselues, & the queene by a craftie policie found meanes to catch the brother and coosens of Venutius, but hir enimies nothing therewith discouraged, but kindled the more in wrath against hir, ceased not to go forward with their purpose.

Manie of the Brigants disdaining to be subject unto a womans rule that had so reiected hir husband, reuolted unto Venutius: but yet the queenes sensuall lust mixed with crueltie, mainteined the adulterer. Venutius therefore calling to him such aid as he could get, and strengthened now by the revolting of the Brigants, brought Cartimanda to such a narrow point, that she was in great danger to fall into the hands of hir enimies: which the Romans foreseeing, upon suit made, sent certeine bands of horssemen and footmen to helpe hir.

"Venutius keepeth the kingdome in despite of the Romans".

They had diuerse incounters with the enimies at the first, with doubtful successe: but at length they preuailed and so deliuered the queene out of perill, but the kingdome remained to Venutius: "against whom the Romans were constrained still to mainteine warre".

<sup>1)</sup> Holinshed vol. I Chapter 8 p. 492.

Didius and Valens are thus spoken of in Holinshed<sup>1)</sup>:

"After the decease of Ostorius Scapula, one A. Didius was sent to supplie his roome, but yer he could come, things were brought out of order, and the Britains had vanquished the legion whereof Manlius Valens had the conduct: this victory was set forth by the Britains to the uttermost, that with the bruit thereof they might strike a feare into the lieutenants hart, now upon this first comming over. And he himselfe reported it by letters to the emperour after the largest manner, to the end that if he appeased the matter, he might win the more praise, or if he were put to the woorst, and should not preuaile, that then his excuse might seeme the more reasonable and woorthie of pardon. The Silures were they that had atchiued this victorie, and kept a fowle stur ouer all the countries about them, till by the comming of Didius against them, they were driuen backe und repelled".

The name Yvor as Prince of the Silurians is not to be found in Holinshed. He may be invented by Philips. The Silurians figure in Holinshed as a warlike tribe and Caratacus as their chief. Holinshed<sup>2)</sup> calls them: "The unquiet Silures, which by consent of most writers inhabited in Southwales, or neere the Welsh marshes". he continues:

"... We will proceed with the historie as touching the warres betwixt the Romans and the Silurians, against whome (trusting not onelie upon their owne manhood, but also upon the high prowesse & valiancie of Caratacus) Ostorius set forward. Caratacus excelled in fame aboue all other the princes of Britanie aduanced thereto by manie doubtfull aduentures and manie prosperous exploits, which in his time he had atchiued: but as he was in policie and advantage of place better prouided than the Romans: so in power of soldiers he was ouermatched. And therefore he removed the battell into the parts of that countrie where the Ordouices inhabited, which are thought to have dwelled in the borders of Shropshire, Cheshire, and Lancashire. The wife and children of Caratake were taken prisoners, and his brethren also yeelded themselues. He himselfe escaped and committing his person unto the assurance & trust of Cartemanda queene of the Brigants, was by hir deliuered into the hands of the Romans. All this happened about nine yeres after the warres in Britaine first began".

In Chapter VII p. 490 and 491 Holinshed says of the Silures:

"At one time the Britains surprised two bands of footmen that were with the Romans in aid and sent forth to forreie abroad

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<sup>1)</sup> Hol. *ibid.* p. 492.

<sup>2)</sup> Hol. Chapt. VI p. 488.

unaduisedlie, through couetousnesse of the capteins. This feat was atchived by the Silures also, the which in bestowing prisoners and part of the spoile upon other of their neighbours, procured them likewise to rebell against the Romans, and to take part with them. The Silures were the more carnestlie set against the Romans, by occasion of words which the emperor Claudius had uttered in their disfavour, as thus: that euen as the Sicambres were destroyed and remooued into Gallia, so likewise must the Silures be dealt with and the whole nation of them extinguished. These words being blowne abroad, and knowne ouer all, caused the Silures to conceive a woonderful hatred against the Romans, so that they were fully bent, either to reteine their libertie, or to die in defense thereof upon the enimies sword".

Holinshed<sup>1)</sup> says about the residence of these tribes:

"Thus have ye heard with what successe the Britains maintained warre in defense of their libertie against the Romans whilst Claudius ruled the empire. But here yon must note, that Hector Boetius, following the authoritie of one Veremond . . . remooveth the Silures, Brigants, and Novants, so farre northward, that he maketh them inhabitants of those countries which the Scots haue now in possession, and were euen then inhabited (as he affirmeth) partlie by the Scots, and partlie by the Picts, so that what notable feat soeuer was atchiued by the old Britains against the Romans, the same by him is ascribed to the Scots and Picts throughout his whole historie, whereas (in verie truth) forsomuch as may be gathered by coniecture and presumption of that which is left in writing by ancient authors, the Brigants inhabited Yorkshire, the Silures Wales and the Marches, and the Nouants the country of Cumberland". In Philips' play Yvor describes himself his country to Gwendolen:

The Briton II, 6.

"Thou hast not seen (my Love) thy Rule; thy Dowry;  
My Native Land: Where Romans never enter'd.  
A Country, bounded by the swelling Severn;  
That, often rising into suddain Rage,  
Takes in an hundred Torrents to her Stream:  
By Nature fenced; the Refuge of the Britons.  
There shall thine Eye behold stupendous Hills,  
Green with high Groves, that wave within the Clouds;  
And gushing Waters, foaming down the Rocks;  
And limpid Brooks, that wind through fruitful Vallies,  
Deep-shelter'd from the Winds, that blast the Plains".

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<sup>1)</sup> Hol. Chapt. VIII p. 492.

A fine description of Wales; the Cornavians were of course the inhabitants of Cornwall.

There are different persons and events taken from Holinshed, that are not precisely in the centre of the whole tragedy, but are referred to by the chief persons. I only mention the names Ostorius, Caradoc and Mandubrace, and Cartismand's treason to Caradoc whom she delivered up to Ostorius and the Romans. Caradoc is often mentioned in the tragedy. Didius says to Valens after the defeat of the Romans:

I, 1. "At Rome, indeed, the Britons are allow'd  
To dare in War; — perhaps, even more than Romans:  
And Caradoc, their captive Chief, was prais'd,  
As a rough Warriour, of undaunted Boldness".

and later on:

You mean,  
The wealthy Queen; — our powerful Allie,  
Who gave up Caradoc?

Cartismand says to Didius:

I, 2. My Faith you cannot doubt: — Witness Caradoc. —

In the interview between Vanoc and Valens, the latter says:

III, 8. You do not recollect the Services,  
The Debts, we owe to Cartismand.

Vanoc: The Services; the Debt! — Notorious Deed! —  
Her earliest Infamy; your worst Disgrace!  
Not recollect! O Caradoc! — Thy Prowess,  
Not thy Credulity, be my Example!  
Not know your Shame! — Yes, every Briton knows it.  
You triumph'd by a Woman's Perfidy!  
Ostorius bought the Foe, he could not conquer;  
Who, else, had conquer'd him, and freed his Island.

Val.: Impetuous Briton! Partial in your Rage!

Van.: The Fate of Caradoc and Shame of Cartismand  
Will ever be remembred through the Land.  
Did she not promise Aids? Invite him to her?  
Receive him with adulterated Smiles?  
Then bind the brave, believing Man in Chains;  
And barter with you for the Boast of Britain?  
Yet this your Emperour vainly call'd a Triumph:  
And made a Spectacle of Vertue, thus betray'd!

Val.: Yon need not thus, employ your Eloquence:  
We know it all.

Van.: Let me recollect.  
Through the wide crowded Streets of Rome, behold

The Warrior walk, Majestick in his Bonds! —  
In the full Senate, now he stands undaunted;  
An aged, awful, a triumphant Captive!  
His Looks, his Works, appall the robed Assembly;  
And shake vain-glorious Claudius on his Throne.

Val.: Claudius took off his Chains. — Remember that!

Van.: Then did your Nobles see a Man; a Briton!

The Admiration; the Terrour of the Romans.

That is the mighty Debt you owe that Woman".

This is taken from Holinshed, VI p. 488, quoted before on page 58 of my pamphlet and from Holinshed, VII p. 490:

"The name of Caratacus being brought out of the Isles was already spread over the provinces adjoining, and began now to grow famous through Italie. Men therefore were desirous to see what manner of man he was that had so manie yeeres at naught the puissant force of the empire, for in Rome the name of Caratacus was much spoken of, insomuch that the emperour whilst he went about to preferre his owne honour, aduanced the glorie of him also that was vanquished: for the people were called forth as unto some great notable sight or spectacle. The pretorian bands stood in order of battell armed in the field that lay before their lodgings, through which field Caratacus should come. Then passed by the traine of his friends and servants; and such armor, riches, iewels, and other things as had bene gotten in those warres, were borne forward, and openly shewed, that all men might behold the same.

After these followed his brethren, wife, and daughters: and last of all came Caratacus himselfe, whose countenance was nothing like to theirs that wente afore him. For whereas they fearing punishment for their rebellion with wailefull countenance craued mercie, he neither by countenance nor words shewed any token of a discouraged mind, but being presented before the emperour Claudius sitting in his tribunall seat, he uttered his speech as followeth:

"If there had bene in me so much moderation in time of prosperitie, as there was nobilitie of birth and puissance, I had come to this citie rather as a friend than as a captaine: neither should I have thought shame, being borne of most noble parents, and ruling over many people, to have accepted peace by waie of joining with you in league. My present estate as it is to me reprochful, so to you it is honorable. I had at commandement horses, men, armor, and great riches; what marvell is it if I were loth to forgo the same? For if you shall looke to governe all men, it must needs follow that all men must be your slaues.

If I had at the first yielded my selfe, neither my power nor your glorie had bene set forth to the world, upon mine execution

I shall straight have béene forgotten. But if you now grant me life, I shall be a witnesse for ever of your mercifull clemencie". The emperour with these words being pacified, granted life both to Caratake, and also his wife and brethren, who being loosed from their bands, went also to the place where the empress Agrippina sat in a chaire of estate, whom they reverenced with the like praise and thanks as they had doone before the emperour.

Hereupon it was determined, that Ostorius should enter the citie of Rome with triumph like a conqueror, for such prosperous successe as hitherto had followed him: but afterwards his proceedings were not so luckie, either for that after Caratake was remooved out of the waie . . ."

Didius says to Cartismand:

I, 2. "Dismiss your Fears.

Rome will uphold her Friends. — In such a Cause,  
She neither counts her Blood, or Treasure, lavish'd.  
Not to recall in other Lands Exploits,  
That signalize our Faith: — Your Ancestor  
(I think, his name was Mandubrace) who fled  
To Gaul, imploring Aid from Caesar,  
Was to his Realm, by Caesar's Arms, restor'd;  
When, last, he enterpriz'd on this new World".

Mandubrace's story is told in Holinshed, Chapter 15 and 16. In Chapter 15 p. 474:

"The Troinouants which some take to be Middlesex & Essex men, whose citie was the best fensed of all those parties and thought to be the same that now is called London, sent ambassadours unto Cesar, offering to submit themselves unto him, and to obeie his ordinances, and further besought him to defend Mandubratius from the iniuries of K. Cassibellane, which Mandubratius had fled unto Cesar into France, after that Cassibellane had slaine his father named Inanuentius, that was chiefe lord and king of the Troinouants, and so now by their ambassadors the same Troinouants requested Cesar, not onely to receive Mandubratius into his protection, but also to send him unto them, that he might take the government and rule of their citie into his hands. Cesar commanded them to deliver unto him 40 hostages, and graine for his armie, and therewith sent Mandubratius unto them. The Troinouants accomplished his commandements with all speed, sending both the appointed number of hostages, and also graine for the armie". In Holinshed Chapter 16 p. 475 I found the following passage:

"Cesar also forbad and commanded Cassibellane, that he should not in anie wise trouble or indamage Madubratius or the Londoners. After this, when he had received the hostages, he brought his armie to the sea, and there found his ships well repaired".

Vanoc prays thus to Adraste:  
the Briton II, I. "Ye Guardian Powers! — And, chiefly, O Adraste;  
Virgin Goddess! — Thou Renown of Britain;  
With Spear and Helmet, terrible in War!  
Grant me this Victory; — And, here, I vow,  
Before the Day, scarce yet begun, shall close,  
To floud (sic.) thy Temple-Court with Roman Blood".

Gwendolen addresses Adraste thus:

II, 8. "And Thee, Adraste, Virgin of my Worship;  
Chaste Goddess, to whom Victory belongs;  
To whom I pledg'd a Vow, for Yvor's Safety;  
Thee will I thank, this Morning, in thy Temple:  
And, every Morning of my Life, shalt thou  
Receive my grateful Vows: — For, thou hast granted  
Victory to Yvor".

These prayers to Adraste have much in common with Queen Voadicia's<sup>1)</sup> prayer to this goddess in Holinshed, Chapter XI p. 496:

"Voadicia calling them (the Britains) together againe, proceeded forward with hir praier, which she made before them all, holding up hir hands after this manner:

"I give thee thanks O Adraste, and call upon thee thou woman of women; which reignest not over the burthen — bearing Aegyptians, as Nitocris; neither over their merchants, as dooth Semiramis, for these trifles we haue learned latelie of the Romans: neither over the people of Rome, as a little héeretofore Messalina, then Agrippina, and now Nero, who is called by the name of a man, but is in deed a verie woman, as dooth appéere by his voice, his harpe, and his womans attire: but I call upon thee as a goddesse which gouernest the Britains, that haue learned not to till the field, nor to be handicrafts men, but to lead their liues in the warres after the best manner: who also as they have all other things, so have they likewise their wiues and children common, whereby the women have the like audacitie with the men, and no lesse boldnesse in the warres than they.

"Therefore sithens I have obtained a kingdome among such a mightie people, I beséech thee to grant them victorie, health, and libertie, against these contentious, wicked, and unsatiable men (if they maie be called men, which use warme bathings, delicate fare, hot wines, sweet oiles, soft beds, fine musicke, and so unkindlie lusts) who are altogether given to couetousnesse and crueltie, as their dooings doo declare. Let not, I beséech thee, the Neronian or

<sup>1)</sup> Voadicia is a sister of Caratacus, she is identical with Boadicia, Boadicea, Bonduca and Voadia.

Domitian tyrannie anie more preuaile upon me, or (to saie truth) upon thee, but let them rather serue thée, whose heauie oppression thou hast borne withall a long season and that thou wilt still be our helper onlie, our defender, our fauourer, and our furtherer, O noble ladie, I heartilie beséech thee."

Another name for Adraste is Andates, as Holinshed states Chapt. XI p. 500:

"All these things they did in great despite whilest they sacrificed in their temples, and made feasts, namelie in the wood consecrated to the honour of Andates, for so they called the goddesse of victorie whom they worshipped most reverentlie".<sup>1)</sup>

In III, 8, the scene between Vanoc and Valens, I found lines much like the expressions of Voadicia despising the refined luxurious life and manners of the Romans and calling them robbers.

For instance: the Briton III, 8.

Vanoc: Say, that you once were vertuous: — Long ago?

A frugal, hardy People; — like the Britons:

Before you grew thus elegant in Vice,

And gave your Luxuries the Name of Vertues.

The Civilizers! — The Disturbers, say; —

The Robbers, the Corrupters of Mankind!

Proud Vagabonds! who make the World your Home;

And lord it, where you have no Right.

You changed us into Beasts, most servile Beasts

To bear your Impositions; your Dominion:

Taught us, indeed, to cloath, to dwell in Houses,

To feast, to sleep on Down, to be profuse:

A fine Exchange for Liberty! — What Vertue

Have you taught?

Gwendolen is a freely invented person, I believe, neither in Holinshed nor elsewhere I found her mentioned. The name is ancient British. Gwendolen is in British mythology the consort of Locrine, son of Brute who was the first king of the Britons and son to Aeneas. Holinshed mentions page 31a "Gwendolena, widow to Locrinus, sone of Brute". I have found the name also in W. Scott's *Bridal of Triermain*, Canto II. and in the *Vita Merlini* by Geoffrey of Monmouth verse 170: *O gemitus lugubris Gwendolenaë*. Comp. San Marte: *Die Sagen von Merlin* p. 317. At present the name is much in fashion in England; one is reminded of our modern predilection for girl's names, such as Brunhilde, Ingeborg, Hildegard etc. At the beginning of the present war an English cruiser, called Gwendolen, was much in question.

<sup>1)</sup> In Glover's *Boadicea* I found the name Andate for the goddess of victory.



Though Gwendolen is a fine figure and attracts our compassion, she is too passive for modern taste, being entirely the victim of a cruel fate. I refer to the judgment of Cibber<sup>1)</sup>:

"Philips has not observed the rules which some critics have established, of distributing poetical justice, for Gwendolen, the most amiable character in the play is the chief sufferer, arising from the indulgence of no irregular passion, nor any guilt of hers".

Gwendolen is the type of a heroine of the old tragedies of fatalism, in which all the blame is laid on fatality alone, this is often pronounced by the word "fatal" in the titles, for example in the *Fatal Curiosity* by George Lillo 1736, the *Fatal Marriage* by Thomas Southerne 1694, the *Fatal Legacy* by J. Robe, the *Fatal Extravagant* by Joseph Mitchell, the *Fatal Dowry* by Massinger and Field, the *Fatal Seduction*, the *Fatal Falsehood*, and others.

In Gwendolen's fate there are two facts I cannot explain: It seems most improbable to me, that in Act II Vanoc and Yvor should let Gwendolen go near the Roman camp only attended by Ebranc, an old officer with a guard. Vanoc says there:

II, 8. Be not dismay'd, my Darling. — Ebranc;  
Do you attend the Princess, with a Guard.  
Not that, we fear; though deep within the Forest,  
Darken'd with spreading Oaks, the Temple stands,  
But, the quail'd Foe scarce think themselves secure,  
Though hemm'd with Rampiers; weak Defence of Dastards!

And, later on, Didius has taken Gwendolen in his tent, and says —

V, 6. "Keep a strict watch, Centurion. On your Life,  
Forbid all Entrance here; till we return". —

Yet, soon afterwards, Cartismand, who of all persons is most intended to be excluded, enters without any trouble or without any explanation how she was able to enter, and kills Gwendolen.

When comparing the relations between Valens and Gwendolen to those of Pyrrhus and Andromache in Philips' *Distress Mother*, I found a great resemblance. Both women are captives and reject the courting of their protectors. Valens expresses almost the same feelings for Gwendolen as Pyrrhus confesses for Andromache. Valens says:

I, 5. "Thou, Idwall, doest not know, how Valens loves:  
Nor feel the Power of such excelling Beauty! —  
I would not triumph over Gwendolen:  
Nor make her mine against her free consent".

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<sup>1)</sup> Cibber, . . . V p. 136.

Valens says after his interview with Vanoc:

III, 9. "The King is much incens'd. — Alas! he knows not  
How far a Lover's Tongue belies his Heart! —  
Mine are fond Menaces; the Throws of Love.  
O Gwendolen, amidst thy Charms secure,  
Still dost thou reign, whatever I endure.  
Thy Beauty and thy Innocence, combin'd,  
At once enflame, and over — awe, the Mind".

Valens like Pyrrhus declares his love to his fair captive, whose heart is filled with love for another man. Like Pyrrhus he threatens Gwendolen, but always treats her with all possible generosity. Pyrrhus says to Andromache in the "Distrest Mother" I, 4:

"Madam, 'tis well! 'Tis very well! I find,  
Your Will must be obey'd: Imperious Captive,  
It shall. Henceforth I blot you from my Mind:  
You teach me to forget your Charms; to hate you,  
For, know, inhuman Beauty, I have loved  
Too well to treat you with Indifference.  
Think well upon it: My disorder'd Soul  
Wavers between th' Extreams of Love and Rage.  
I've been too tame! I will awake to Vengeance!  
The Son shall answer for the Mother's Scorn.  
The Greeks demand him: Nor will I endanger  
My Realms, to pleasure an ungrateful Woman".

But in II, 5 Pyrrhus says to Phoenix:

"O 'tis a heavy Task to conquer Love!  
And wean the Soul from her accustom'd Fondness".

It is impossible to him to undertake anything against Andromache.

Valens says to Gwendolen:

IV, 6. "Enough! — It is too much! — Insulting Captive! —  
Your open Scorn, unmerited Disdain,  
Makes me most desperate; and turns my Love,  
My slighted Goodness, into Indignation".  
"Most cruel! — Not to let me hope a while!  
But, I will make you desperate as my Self".  
"Nay, to Cartismand  
Will I resign you".

And soon afterwards, in Act V, he protects her with all his might from Cartismand.

Valens and Didius are noble characters, but in my opinion, Philips treats the Romans, those universal robbers with too much respect in this piece.

Many passages remind me of Shakespeare on account of their beauty, for instance Cartismand's words at the end of I, 3:

"Behold, the Moon shines on the pearly Dews:  
And through the Night, directs the advancing Troops".

From a poetic point of view the "Briton" is of considerable value, but it is not well adapted to the stage, this is perhaps one reason, why it is so entirely forgotten by this time. It might be worth undertaking a new edition of this tragedy, as English literature does not abound in old British legends and the "Briton" could well be used for reading in school.

Cibber<sup>1)</sup> judges the play thus:

"Mr. Philips in this play has shown how well he was acquainted with the stage; he keeps the scene perpetually busy; great designs are carrying on, the incidents rise naturally from one another, and the catastrophe is moving".

Genest<sup>2)</sup> says of it:

"This Tragedy is a pretty good play on the whole, but there is too much love — Vanoc and Cartismand are good characters — the scene between Vanoc and Valens is by far the best thing Philips ever wrote".

### 3. Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester.

In 1723 appeared Philips' Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, it is founded on part II of Shakespeare's Henry VI<sup>th</sup>.

Philips shows a better literary taste than most of his contemporaries, by imitating and admiring Shakespeare in opposition to the prevailing line of thought in poetry. In Philips' time very few poets had an interest for Shakespeare. Dean Swift cites Shakespeare only once in all his writings, and Walter Scott supposes that Swift did not possess one single work of Shakespeare. Addison wrote in his youth a poem about the great English poets and entirely forgot to mention Shakespeare, though he had afterwards a warm admiration for Shakespeare as a great natural genius. Pepys states in his Diary, that to his taste Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet is the worst play he ever heard (1 March 1662), the Midsummer-Night's Dream the most ridiculous and insipid play he ever saw (29 September 1662), Henry VIII<sup>th</sup> a simple thing (1 January 1663) Othello a mean thing (20 August 1666) and the Tempest has no sense (7 November 1667).

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<sup>1)</sup> Cibber . . . V p. 136.

<sup>2)</sup> Genest . . . III p. 69.

In the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century different Shakespeare editions appeared, it would lead me too far to go into details about them, I will only mention them: In 1709 Nikolas Rowe published a critical edition of Shakespeare's works with a biography of Shakespeare. Rowe was so successful, that in 1714 a second edition followed. In 1725 appeared Pope's edition of Shakespeare's works, Pope had much changed them according to his own taste. In 1726 (Ward<sup>1</sup>) states 1733) Lewis Theobald published his Shakespeare edition under the title "Shakespear Restored". Other editions followed in 1733, 1744, 1747 and 1751. It is, however, chiefly through the influence of David Garrick, that Shakespeare came to the front again, after having been pushed aside for so many years by the Heroic Tragedy. Garrick first represented Richard III, this character is recognized as one of his most famous. Garrick's splendid play brought in fact about the beginning of the revival of Shakespeare on the scene.

Rowe's profound studies of Shakespeare led him to imitate him in his tragedy "Jane Shore". In 1714 Jane Shore was produced at Drury Lane, it was acted nineteen times and long held the stage. The Epilogue was written by Pope. Rowe tries to draw Richard III, emphasizing all his diabolical qualities as Shakespeare has painted him. Rowe says positively, that this tragedy is an imitation of Shakespeare and that it was written in Shakespeare's style.

In the prologue we read:

"In such an age, immortal Shakespeare wrote,  
By no quaint rules, nor hampering critics taught!  
With rough majestic force he mov'd the heart,  
And strength and nature made amends for art.  
Our humble author does his steps pursue,  
He owns he had the mighty bard in view".

But I think, Johnson and Pope judge rightly that the tragedy has little resemblance with Shakespeare's art. Pope<sup>2</sup>) says of it: "I have seen a play professedly writ in the style of Shakespeare, wherein the resemblance lay in one single line:

"And so good morrow t'ye, good  
Master Lieutenant".

Colley Cibber (1671—1757) published also an alteration of Shakespeare's Richard III; besides he wrote a "Papal Tyranny in the reign of King John", a play, altered from Shakespeare's "King John"; as it had no success, Cibber quietly withdrew it. Pope refers to it in the Dunciad I, 252:

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<sup>1</sup>) A. W. Ward, A history of English Dramatic literature to the death of Queen Anne I p. 528.

<sup>2</sup>) Pope, by Jos. Warton vol. VI p. 210; Martinus Scriblerus Chapter IX.

"King John in silence modestly expires". In 1721 and 1722 was acted Theobald's Richard II, an imitation of Shakespeare's tragedy.

In 1680 "Henry the VI<sup>th</sup>, the second part, or the Miseries of Civil War" was acted in "Dorset Garden" and in 1681 "Henry the VI<sup>th</sup>, the first part, with the murder of Humphrey duke of Gloucester"; both by John Crown.

Cibber<sup>1)</sup> says of the latter:

"This play was at first acted with applause; but at length the Romish faction opposed it, and by their interest at court got it suppressed".

Crowne concluded the prologue saying that he had sprinkled "a little vinegar against the Pope"; but it was by no means a little. Genest<sup>2)</sup> states:

"This play is chiefly made up for the 1<sup>st</sup> three acts of Shakespeare's Henry the 6<sup>th</sup>, part 2<sup>d</sup>, it ends with a narration of Suffolk's death, and with the breaking out of Cade's rebellion — Crown has enlarged the parts of the Queen, Suffolk and the Cardinal — he sometimes uses Shakespeare's own words, and sometimes alters them, making large additions of his own".

In the Prologue Crowne professes himself to have mended a good old play, saying:

"To-day we bring old gather'd herbs 'tis true,  
But such as in sweet Shakespeare's garden grew.  
And all his plants immortal you esteem,  
Your months are never out of taste with him".

And in the epilogue:

"Not that a Barb that's come of Shakespeare's breed.  
Can e'er want mettle, courage, shape or speed".

Henry VI<sup>th</sup> by Crowne was altered and represented at Drury Lane on the 5<sup>th</sup> July 1723. Genest<sup>3)</sup> states:

"This alteration was made by Theophilus Cibber, who has borrowed considerably from the former alteration made by Crowne in 1681", and on p. 112:

"Cibber's alteration is a very bad one; he has however retained considerably more of the original than Crowne had done, as Th. Cibber was not quite 20 years old, and as he was at his time in habits of intimacy with Savage, it is not improbable that Savage might assist him in writing such passages as were new".

When we consider that Crowne's Henry VI<sup>th</sup> was revived and altered in 1723, it might be supposed, that Philips has also known Cibber's alteration and turned it to account. This conjecture is easily

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<sup>1)</sup> Cibber III, 109.

<sup>2)</sup> Genest I, 302.

<sup>3)</sup> Genest III, 110.

refuted; Th. Cibber's work cannot be in question, as it was acted 5 months later than Philips' *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester*, which was acted on the 15<sup>th</sup> February 1723. There is another reason: it contains only events of Shakespeare's *Henry VI<sup>th</sup>* that happen after Philips' play; it begins with the first scene of Shakespeare's *V<sup>th</sup>* act in *Henry VI<sup>th</sup>* part 2<sup>nd</sup>, while Philips' play closes with the death of Beaufort, which is the end of act III of Shakespeare's tragedy.

On the other hand it seems possible to me that Philips has consulted Crowne's *Henry VI<sup>th</sup>* part 1<sup>st</sup> with the *Murder of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester*. Crowne's play is taken from the first 3 acts of Shakespeare's *Henry VI<sup>th</sup>* part 2<sup>nd</sup> and Philips' from act II and III. In Crowne's work as well as in Philips' I found long passages which severely attack the Roman Catholic Church, while there are no such attacks in Shakespeare. Both authors have enlarged and spoilt the inimitable scene of Cardinal Beaufort's death; Crowne by about 40 lines, in which Gloucester's ghost appears to the Cardinal and accuses him. In Philips' play York and Eleanor, Duchess of Gloucester are present at the death-scene. Both additions are exceedingly insipid.

According to Genest<sup>1)</sup> Philips' *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester*, was first acted at Drury Lane on February 15<sup>th</sup> 1723 and was acted 9 times. The actors were almost the same as in Philips' other plays, the Duke of Gloucester being represented by Booth, Cardinal Beaufort by Cibber, York by Mills, Warwick by Williams, Queen Margaret by Mrs Oldfield and the Duchess of Gloucester by Mrs. Porter.

Philips' *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester* is derived from Act II and III of Shakespeare's *Henry VI<sup>th</sup>* part 2<sup>nd</sup>. These acts deal with the story of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. Philips in his striving after unity omits all that is not closely connected with the Duke of Gloucester. In Shakespeare's play there are about thirty persons, in Philips' are only twelve.

A glance at the beginning of the two tragedies shows that Philips' adaptation begins with act II of Shakespeare's play.

The chief action in Philips' tragedy is in short as follows:

During the minority of *Henry VI<sup>th</sup>* his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, has been "Lord Protector of the Realm". He is much beloved by the whole nation, but his high position has procured him enemies, among them the Duke of Suffolk. In order to make young Henry independent, the latter has arranged a marriage between King Henry VI and Margaret of Anjou. This queen is of great beauty and of extraordinary intelligence, courage and ambition. She has an aversion for the Duke of Gloucester, the Lord Protector, chiefly because she wants to rule herself and because he has opposed her marriage for

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<sup>1)</sup> Genest III, 102.

different reasons. Margaret has resolved on Gloucester's ruin and has on her side the Duke of Suffolk and Cardinal Beaufort, Gloucester's uncle, a proud and crafty churchman. In order to shake Gloucester's power, they first attack his consort Eleanor and separate her from him.

The first act begins with the report of the seizure of the Duchess of Gloucester, she is sentenced to do public penance for several days and condemned to perpetual imprisonment in the Isle of Man. She is charged to have made an image of wax resembling the King and to have treated it by incantation and sorceries, to make him waste away as the image gradually consumed. This awful accusation was made to shake the Duke's influence; a purpose, easily attained in those times full of superstition and ignorance. Very fine is the parting-scene in which Eleanor entreats Gloucester to check his resentment. In the second act Gloucester defends himself and his wife's honour against Beaufort and Suffolk and complains of the harsh treatment of his wife. In the third act Gloucester is confined to his apartment on suspicion of high treason. Gloucester's friends and the whole populace rise in his favour, but Warwick appeases them upon Gloucester's desire.

At the end of the fourth act Beaufort sends two hired assassins into Gloucester's chamber to murder him, while Beaufort himself continues on the stage.

In the fifth act the Duchess of Gloucester and Warwick find the Duke murdered. Warwick and Salisbury accuse the Cardinal of the murder. A rebellion bursts out, Suffolk who fears the people's rage, attempts to escape, but his barge is attacked on the Thames and he is killed. In the last scene Beaufort is dying in the agonies of remorse and despair.

In his preface to the reader Philips acknowledges that he has taken hints from Shakespeare's Henry VI<sup>th</sup> part 2<sup>nd</sup> and has copied several lines from him. Philips has indeed borrowed a number of entire passages from the original with small alterations or none at all; I found about 40 lines that are almost literally alike; I shall quote them here:

Shakespeare's Henry VI<sup>th</sup> I, 2 Cardinal Beaufort:

"... What though the common people favour him,  
Calling him "Humphrey, the good Duke of Gloucester,  
Clapping their hands, and crying with loud voice,  
"Jesu maintain your royal excellence!"  
With "God preserve the good Duke Humphrey!"

Philips' Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. III, 7. Beaufort.

Who has not heard the Blast of vulgar Breath,  
Calling him Humfrey, the Good Duke of Gloucester;

Clapping their Hands, and crying with loud Voice,  
Long may your Royal Excellency live;  
With Heaven preserve the good Duke Humphrey! —

Shakesp. III, 2. Re-enter Warwick and others, bearing  
Gloucester's body on a bed.

Warwick.

See how the blood is settled in his face.

Oft have I seen a timely — parted ghost,  
Of ashy senblance, meagre, pale and bloodless  
Being all descended to the labouring heart;  
Who, in the conflict that it holds with death,  
Attracts the same for aidance 'gainst the enemy;  
Which with the heart there cools and ne'er returneth  
To blush and beautify the cheek again.

But see, his face is black and full of blood,  
His eye-balls further out than when he lived,  
Staring full ghastly like a strangled man;  
His-hair uprear'd, his nostrils stretch'd with struggling;  
His hands abroad display'd, as one that grasp'd  
And tugg'd for life and was by strength subdued:  
Look, on the sheets his hair, you see, is sticking;  
His well-proportion'd beard made rough and rugged,  
Like to the summer's corn by tempest lodged.  
It cannot be but he was murder'd here;  
The least of all these signs were probable.

Philips gives almost the same description of the Duke's dead body, but according to classic rules Gloucester's body is not brought on the stage.

Philips V, 6.

York: O, Madam; many Witnesses, with Me,  
Have seen, have read, the characters of Murder!  
Where sickness kills, oft have I seen the Corse  
Of ashy Semblance; meagre; pale; and bloodless;  
The darken'd Eyes, in-sunk; the Nose, compress'd.  
But, the Duke's Face is black; and full of Blood!  
His Eye-Balls, farther out, than when he liv'd,  
Staring, full-ghastly; like a strangled Man!  
His Nostrils, stretch'd with struggling! His Mouth agasp  
For vital Breath! His ruffled Hair, up-rear'd!  
His Hands, a-broad display'd; as One, that grasp'd,  
And tugg'd for Life; and was subdued by Force.

There is so much likeness in the death-scenes, in Shakespeare III, 3 and in Philips V, 18, that I shall quote them both. Philips



says, that some lines of this scene "are so very beautiful, that it may be questioned whether there be any passages in Shakespeare that deserve greater Commendation".

Sh. III, 3 A bedchamber. Enter the King, Salisbury, Warwick, to the Cardinal in bed.

King: How fares my lord? speak, Beaufort, to thy sovereign.

Cardinal: If thou be'st death, I'll give thee England's treasure,  
Enough to purchase such another island,  
So thou wilt let me live, and feel no pain.

King: Ah, what a sign it is of evil life,  
Where death's approach is seen so terrible!

Warwick: Beaufort, it is thy sovereign speaks to thee.

Cardinal: Bring me unto my trial when you will.  
Died he not in his bed? where should he die?  
Can I make men live, whether they will or no?  
O, torture me no more! I will confess.

Alive again? then show me where he is:  
I'll give a thousand pound to look upon him.  
He has no eyes, the dust hath blinded them.  
Comb down his hair; look, look! it stands upright,  
Like lime-twigs set to catch my winged soul.  
Give me some drink; and bid the apothecary  
Bring the strong poison that I bought of him.

King: O thou eternal mover of the heavens,  
Look with a gentle eye upon this wretch!  
O, beat away the busy meddling fiend  
That lays strong siege unto this wretch's soul,  
And from his bosom purge this black despair!

War.: See, how the pangs of death do make him grin!

Sal.: Disturb him not; let him pass peaceably.

King: Peace to his soul, if God's good pleasure be!  
Lord cardinal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,  
Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope.  
He dies, and makes no sign. O God, forgive him!

— — — — —

Philips V, 18.

Beaufort, Warwick, Eleanor, Salisbury, York.

Salisb.: How fares the Cardinal?

Warw.: As one, just launching  
Into Eternity! —

York: Behold him, gasping!

Beauf.: Why do you stifle me? — I have been at Shrift. —

- My Soul is white, as Snow! — What needed we  
Have purchas'd Votes? — Was not the Murder cheaper?
- Salisb.: My Lord, the King has sent us —
- Beauf.: King of Terrours! —  
If thou beest Death, I'll give thee England's Treasure;  
So thou wilt let me live, and feel no Pain.
- York: The King my Lord, your Royal Nephew, sends —
- Beauf.: Bring me, then, to my Trial, when you will. —  
Died he not in his Bed? — Where should he die? —  
Can I make Men live, whether they will, or no? —  
Alive again? — Then, shew me, where he is! —  
Combe down his Hair. — Look; look! — It stands upright:  
Like Lime-Twigs, set to catch my winged Soul!
- — — — —
- Elean.: O, Thou eternal Mover of the Heavens;  
Look, with a gentle Eye, upon this Wretch!  
Oh, beat away the busy, meddling Fiend;  
That lays strong Siege to his departing Soul;  
And, from his Bosome, purge this black Despair!
- Warw.: See, how the Pangs of Death work, in his Features!
- York: Disturb him not. — Let him pass, peaceably.
- Elean.: Lord Cardinal; — If thou thinkst on Heaven's Bliss;  
Hold up thy Hand; — Make Signal of thy Hope. —  
He dies; — and makes No Sign!
- — — — —

As we have seen in these passages, Philips often attributes lines from Shakespeare's play to other personages.

Eleanor addresses her consort in:

- Sh. I, 2. Why droops my lord, like over-ripen'd corn,  
Hanging the head at Ceres' plenteous load?

Gloucester says to York in:

- Ph. II, 4. Why droops the noble York?

The simile is omitted. Shakespeare's Henry VI<sup>th</sup> is extremely rich in beautiful pictures, many have become familiar sayings, for instance Suffolk says, accusing Gloucester:

- Sh. III, 1. Smooth runs the water, where the brook is deep.

— — — — —  
The fox barks not when he would steal the lamb.

Philips' work, on the contrary, is poor in similes, I shall only quote two.

Ph. III, 1.

- Beauf.: . . . Fear nurses up a Danger;  
And Resolution kills it, in the Birth.

Ph. IV, 7.

Glou.: . . . To what a Pitch of Glory  
Did our late Leader, of immortal Memory,  
Build up the Nation's Prowess? — That (like a Pyramid  
Of Fire, high on a Mountain rais'd, to shine by Night)  
Our Blaze of Valour drew the Admiration  
Of the wide Continent! —

There is much likeness in the description of Eleanor's penance in the two tragedies. In Shakespeare it is thus related by Gloucester and his consort:

Sh. II, 4.

Glou.: Ten is the hour that was appointed me  
To watch the coming of my punish'd duchess:  
Uneath may she endure the flinty streets,  
To tread them with her tender-feeling feet.  
Sweet Nell, ill can thy noble mind abrook  
The abject people gazing on thy face,  
With envious looks laughing at thy shame,  
That erst did follow thy proud chariot-wheels,  
When thou didst ride in triumph through the streets.  
But, soft! I think she comes; and I'll prepare  
My tear-stain'd eyes to see her miseries.

— — — — —  
Duch.: Come you, my lord, to see my open shame?  
Now thou dost penance too. Look how they gaze!  
See how the giddy multitude do point,  
And nod their heads, and throw their eyes on thee!  
Ah, Gloucester, hide thee from their hateful looks,  
And, in thy closet pent up, rue my shame,  
And ban thine enemies, both mine and thine!

Glou.: Be patient, gentle Nell; forget this grief.

Duch.: Ah, Gloucester, teach me to forget myself!  
For whilst I think I am thy married wife,  
And thou a prince, protector of this land,  
Methinks I should not thus be led along,  
Mail'd up in shame, with papers on my back,  
And follow'd with a rabble that rejoice  
To see my tears and hear my deep-fet groans.  
The ruthless flint doth cut my tender feet,  
And when I start, the envious people laugh,  
And bid me be advised how I tread.  
Ah, Humphrey, can I bear this shameful yoke?  
Trow'st thou that e'er I'll look upon the world,

Or count them happy that enjoy the sun?  
 No; dark shall be my light and night my day;  
 To think upon my pomp shall be my hell.  
 Sometime I'll say, I am Duke Humphrey's wife,  
 And he a prince and ruler of the land:  
 Yet so he ruled, and such a prince he was,  
 As he stood by whilst I, his forlorn duchess,  
 Was made a wonder and a pointing-stock  
 To every idle rascal follower.

Warwick and York relate the penance in:

Phil. II, 4.

Warwick: What pitying Eye, seeing what We beheld,  
 But wept; — as Gloucester's crimeless Consort pass'd,  
 In Penance rude, along the flinty Streets! —

York: And ever, when some rugged Pebble wounds  
 Her tender-feeling Feet, the abject Rabble  
 Scoff, as she starts with Anguish of the Pain;  
 And, bid her be advised, how she treads: —

Warw.: While pale, and red, by Turns, with guiltless Shame,  
 To Earth she bends, — sometimes to Heaven she lifts,  
 Her ruefull Eyes, — profuse of gushing Tears.

One line is entirely copied:

in Sh. "and bid me be advised how I tread".

in Phi. "and, bid her be advised, how she treads".

Shakespeare's sources were Holinshed and Hall. In Holinshed<sup>1)</sup>  
 I found the following passage:

"Dame Eleanor Cobham, wife to the said duke, was accused  
 of treason, for that she by sorcerie and inchantment intended to  
 destroe the king, to the intent to aduance hir husband unto the  
 crowne. Upon this she was examined in saint Stephans chappell  
 before the bishop of Canturburie, and there by examination conuict,  
 and iudged to doo open penance in three open places within the  
 citie of London. (Polychronicon saith she was inioined to go through  
 Cheapside with a taper in hir hand) and after that adiudged to  
 perpetuall imprisonment in the Ile of Man, under the kéeping of  
 sir John Stanlie knight. At the same season were arrested, arreigned  
 and adiudged giltie, as aiders to the duchesse, Thomas Southwell,  
 priest, and canon of S. Stephans at Westminster, John Hum priest,  
 Roger Bolingbrooke a cunning necromancer (as it was said) and  
 Margerie Jordeine, surnamed the witch of Eie.

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<sup>1)</sup> Holinshed III p. 210.

The matter laid against them, was, for that they (at the request of the said duchesse) had deuised an image of wax representing the king, who by their sorcerie by little and little consumed, intending thereby in conclusion to waste and destroe the kings person".

In Sh. II, 1. Buckingham says that Eleanor has

... practised dangerously against your state,  
Dealing with witches and with conjurers:  
Whom we have apprehended in the fact;  
Raising up wicked spirits from under ground,  
Demanding of King Henry's life and death,  
And other of your highness' privy council;  
As more at large your grace shall understand.

Warwick states in:

Phil. I, 1. "That she had fashion'd

A Model of his Majesty, in Wax;  
With which, his Person is to Sympathize;  
Consuming daily, as the Wax consumes".

While Shakespeare has used the above, on page 76—77, quoted passage from Holinshed here and in different other scenes, but has not taken up the last part of the accusation, Philips only takes the story of the wax model and quotes it almost literally. This is a fine criterion to prove that Philips has also read Holinshed himself.

Warwick says of Queen Margaret in:

Phil. I, 3. "Here comes the Sovereign Power! — Our female Ruler:

In Feature Woman; but, in Heart, a Man:  
Fair as the Queen of Beauty, Bold, as Mars".

This passage is also taken from Holinshed<sup>1)</sup>:

"This lady excelled all others, as well in beautie and favour, as in wit and policie and was of stomach and courage more like to a man than a woman".

In the character of York Philips differs from Holinshed and Shakespeare. According to Holinshed<sup>2)</sup> "Diverse noblemen conspired against Gloucester . . . not unprocured by the cardinale of Winchester and the archbishop of Yorke". Shakespeare also schows York as Gloucester's enemy, who wants Gloucester's ruin for his proper projects.

York says in:

Sh. II, 2. We thank you, lords. But I am not your king  
Till I be crown'd, and that my sword be stain'd  
With heart-blood of the house of Lancaster;  
And that's not suddenly to be perform'd,

<sup>1)</sup> Holinshed III p. 207.

<sup>2)</sup> Holinshed III p. 210.

But with advice and secrecy.  
Do you as I do in these dangerous days:  
Wink at the Duke of Suffolk's insolence,  
At Beaufort's pride, at Sommerset's ambition,  
At Buckingham and all the crew of them,  
Till they have snared the shepherd of the flock,  
That virtuous prince, the good Duke Humphrey:  
'Tis that they seek, and they in seeking that  
Shall find their deaths, if York can prophesy.

And in:

Sh. III, 2. "For Humphrey being dead, as he shall be,  
And Henry put apart, the next for me".

York works Gloucester's ruin by accusing him wrongly, in:

Sh. III, 1. 'Tis thought, my lord, that you took bribes of France,  
And, being protector, stay'd the soldiers' pay;  
By means whereof his highness hath lost France.

I cannot explain, why in Philips York belongs to Gloucester's friends; York says in:

Phil. II, 4. What generous Breast, but saddens, with your Highness!  
and:

Let Gloucester but resolve; We come determin'd,  
To stand the foremost Champions in your Cause.

Philips represents York here and through all his tragedy unjustly as a true friend to Gloucester.

Equal to Crowne Philips has added to Shakespeare's original some severe attacks against the Roman Catholic Church, for instance, Warwick says in a monologue in

Phil. I, 3. Farewell, Hypocrisy and Pride! — Grey Hairs,  
And griping Hands! — Ambitious; — harsh and dreadfull,  
Even to thy Friends! — What a Disgrace, that Men, —  
That Kings, should stand in Awe of such a Pageant!  
A Shew of Sanctity, trick'd up in Scarlet.  
Believe in Sorcery? — No, Cardinal! —  
Thy Wit is not so dull. — What have the Laity  
To do with Faculties, They dare not use? —  
Reason, in Us, is Carnal. — Beasts that we are;  
To suffer Rome to shackle our free Thoughts,  
And fool our very Senses! — . . .

Other attacks of this kind I found in Phil. II, 2.

Glou.: Her whole Demerits are, That, in Religion,  
She reasons more, perhaps, than you allow:

Perhaps rejects, as frivolous and vain,  
What Churchmen teach of Witchcraft, and of Spells.

— — — — —

Beauf.: She cleaves to Wickliff's Heresy! — Declare  
That boasted Merit to the Spiritual Court;  
And give her up to Flames: — And, clear thyself  
Of all Suspicion. —

Glou.: Most degenerate Beaufort? —  
Thou base-born Offspring of brave Lancaster;  
My famous Grandsire: — Doest thou then disturb  
Thy blessed Father's Rest? — The mighty Patron  
Of learned Wickliff, and his Followers.

The third act ends with the following monologue of Warwick:

Phil. III, 7.

Proud, — and Rich Cardinal! — No wonder Thou art proud:  
Thy Order can be Proud and Poor: In Shew,  
Most humble; in Heart most arrogant. — The Monk,  
That asks an Alms, is a proud, lazy Varlet. —  
Fie upon this Mockery! —  
O, might I live to bless the happy Day,  
When Rome, no more, usurps tyrannick Sway! —  
Or, That deny'd; may our Descendents see  
The Land, through out, from Superstition free:  
With Kings, who fill an independent Throne,  
And know no Power, Supreme, beside their Own.

York accuses the clergy thus in:

Phil. IV, 2.

York: The Ties of Blood! — No, Winchester! — The Priesthood,  
To Celibacy vow'd, are dead to all Endearments. —  
What Ties have You? — Nor conjugal, nor filial Love,  
Nor Brotherhood, nor Parents Griefs; or Joys,  
Nor Friendship's generous Flame, nor Sympathies  
Of any Kind, affect your Hearts! —

Beauf.: Forbear:  
I must not hear you, thus inveigh against your Spiritual Guides,

York: Our merciless Opressers! —  
In all your Interests, sever'd from the People,  
Of worldly Wealth, and Pomp, and Power, you would  
Ingross the Whole; And leave, to Us, the Cares,  
The Servitude, the Penury, of Life:  
Giving us empty Benedictions, in Exchange,  
For the substantial Blessings, You enjoy.

Beauf.: Would you destroy the Authority of our Church?

York: It's Tyranny. — A heavy Yoke, impos'd  
Not upon Subjects only, but on Kings! —  
Should One, of Your Distinction, be arrested;  
Nay, an inferiour Priest; — And even by Law:  
You, soon, would raise an Outcry, full of Tumult,  
To shake, if not subvert, the establish'd Throne.

Genest<sup>1)</sup> judges these passages thus:

"Some of the sentiments he has introduced about Papal Rome, etc. are proper in themselves but not suited to the times — a fault which seldom or never occurs in Shakespeare. —" I quite agree with Genest and can only add that I take these lines of Philips' for an imitation of Crowne's.

In Shakespeare's Henry VI, second part, act II has four scenes and act III only three. There is only one monologue spoken by York, when he is left alone on the stage at the end of III, 1. In Philips the 1<sup>st</sup> act has nine scenes, the 2<sup>nd</sup> has six, the 3<sup>d</sup> act has twelve, while act IV has fourteen scenes, five of them are monologues, one of Gloucester and four of Beaufort, act V contains no less than eighteen scenes, four scenes being monologues. In the whole tragedy are twelve monologues, five of Beaufort, three of Gloucester, two of the Queen, and two of Warwick. This shows us again as in the Distrest Mother Philips' preference for monologues and for many even though sometimes short scenes. Philips is indeed most successful in monologue. I think, it is most suitable to his talent, because it does not require so much creative genius as the dialogue, as it is more of a reflective nature and only the state of one mind is to be represented. For a proof of Philips' talent in this direction I quote Beaufort's monologue in:

Phil. IV, 12.

Beauf.: At length I find the Stilness, I have wish'd. —  
The Mutineers are pacified: The Friends  
Of Gloucester are retir'd: The Sentinels,  
O'erpower'd with Wine, Sleep, a dead Sleep. — The Hour  
Past Midnight, wastes in the Glass. — Soon the Bell, —  
That parcels Time, will give the appointed Signal:  
The Minute for the Deed. — Hark! — Was That, a Groan? —  
Again? — The hollow-whirling Wind. — O lull the Duke  
To his eternal Rest! — Yet; — I feel Somewhat,  
Bids me forbear: — and pleads, within for Mercy. —  
Idle Remorse! — What though He be my Nephew? —

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<sup>1)</sup> Genest III, 103.



Were he my Father, — Must I imbitter Life;  
 Quit all my Hopes; — and forfeit my Ambition? —  
 Did he not, Twice, attempt my Overthrow? —  
 And, will he, exasperated as he is,  
 Spare me, to Morrow? — Then — Self-Defence.  
 Nature's first Law, acquits me to my Self. —  
 He makes Me wretched: — I set him at Ease. —  
 What Injury? — He leaves no helpless Orphan:  
 And, to his Wife he is already, dead. —  
 And; What is Loss of Life? — A Loss we never  
 Regret. — Would it were done! — And I, asleep! —  
 It strikes! — The Stroke of unrelenting Fate! —  
 Sleep, Humphrey; sleep! — The Period of Thy Cares,  
 And Mine, is come. — Ha! — What warning Voice?  
 Whence? —  
 Methinks, I hear a Voice cry; Gloucester, awake! —  
 Who comes? —

In my opinion the difference of the two poets shows much more in dialogue especially where high pathos is wanted. In Shakespeare every character has his proper way of speaking, that distinguishes him from the others, and gives him individuality: the Duke of Gloucester's rashness is manifested in his bold and hasty words, Queen Margaret has a manner of speaking harmonizing with her qualities of mind, while King Henry VI<sup>th</sup> shows his weak character in all his words; Beaufort's falsehood and malice is expressed in his dissembling tone. In Philips there is little difference in the language of his characters. When two people are on the stage, the dialogue is sometimes nothing but a monologue of the chief person. Philips' dialogues, especially in the scenes that are his own work, are lacking in action, being often mere descriptions or long reports of messengers.

In different lines Philips has well succeeded in drawing the tumult of human passions and the state of mind of his characters, showing real dramatic power and poetic sentiment; but in other passages, where dramatic pathos would be in the right place, Philips confounds bombastic language with Shakespeare's expression of true *ipasson*.

I think Genest<sup>1)</sup> is right with regard to Philips, when he states: "Shakespeare's play abounds too much in trifling incidents — Philips has too much mere conversation — . . ., on the whole his Tragedy is not a bad one, but it is cold and declamatory in comparison with Shakespeare's".

<sup>1)</sup> Genest III 103.

It must be admitted that in the whole Philips' play wants movement and life and compared to its great model, it remains far behind, this is not astonishing, for who has ever reached Shakespeare? But if we draw a parallel between Philips' work and other adaptations of Shakespeare in Philips' time, his Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester can well bear comparison with them. The play was well adapted and useful for reviving Shakespeare in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, now, of course, since Shakespeare has been rehabilitated, Shakespeare's work, the great original, will always be preferred to all its weaker imitations.

After all that is said about Philips' tragedies, we can only call him a minor dramatic author; though his tragedies show some weak points, they have so much beauty that it would be unjust to deny Philips' genius for tragedy.

Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and the Briton have not been immortalized by famous criticism as the Distrest Mother, but both, especially Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, have rather fine prologues and epilogues. I only refer to Leonard Welsted's verses to Mr. Philips on his Tragedy of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester; they are beautiful indeed and very flattering for Philips.

Philips dedicated his three tragedies as almost all his works to some high-born protector, a person of high rank and influence, as it was the fashion then. Ward<sup>1)</sup> states:

"In the reign of Queen Anne and in the so-called Augustan age of English literature . . . in those days, if our literary men at times aspired to be statesmen, our statesmen desired with at least equal ardour to be accounted literary men, or at all events to stand forth as the sympathetic friends and patrons of literature. In this period Shakespeare's literary fame may be said to have been definitively established".

Lindner<sup>2)</sup> says:

„Mit solchen Widmungen wurde damals der reine Unfug getrieben. Jeder Schriftsteller dedizierte sein Werk, und mochte es noch so schlecht sein, einem hochgestellten oder reichen Manne, von dem er als Entgelt für solche Ehre einen einträglichen Posten oder Vermehrung seines Honorars in klingender Münze erhoffte. War beides aussichtslos, dann trug ein berühmter Name, der hinter dem Titelblatte stand, wenigstens viel zur Verbreitung des Werkes und zum Schweigen der Kritiker bei, die es dann nicht wagten, es zum Gegenstande ihres Spottes zu machen, weil sie die Rache oder den Unwillen seines Schutzengels fürchteten“.

<sup>1)</sup> Ward I, 525.

<sup>2)</sup> Dr. F. Lindner, H. Fielding's dram. Werke S. 174.



